United Nations S/PV.4857

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4857th meeting

Thursday, 13 November 2003, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Von Ungern-Sternberg
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Atieh
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenblatt

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Second report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2003/1069)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-61099 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Second report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2003/1069)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djangone-Bi (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will continue its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the second report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2003/1069).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2003/1083, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1514 (2003).

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council urges all Ivorian political forces to implement fully, without delay or precondition all the provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement as well as those of the agreement reached in Accra on 8 March 2003 ('Accra II') with a view to open, free and transparent elections being held in Côte d'Ivoire in 2005.

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction the progress made since the statement by its President on 25 July, in particular the appointment of Ministers of Interior and Defence, the adoption of the amnesty bill by the National Assembly, the reopening of the border with Mali and Burkina Faso, and the decisions taken by the Council of Ministers on 16 October to restore public order and reform the statute of Ivorian radio and television (RTI).

"The Security Council expresses its serious concern, however, that the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement has slowed down. It emphasizes in particular the importance of the entire Government of National Reconciliation meeting as soon as possible in order to implement fully the content of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. It reaffirms in this context the urgency of carrying out the cantonment operations of the forces involved, to allow the beginning of disarmament and demobilization, accompanied by measures for reintegration into the regular army or civilian life.

"The Security Council further emphasizes the urgent need to begin reforming land law and electoral rules, restore public services and the authority of the State throughout the territory of

Côte d'Ivoire, and end the use of mercenaries and the illicit purchase of weapons in violation of national laws.

"The Security Council condemns firmly the grave human rights violations. It further condemns the murder of a French journalist on 21 October in Abidjan. The Security Council calls for a full investigation by the Ivorian authorities of this crime and punishment of the perpetrators in accordance with the law. It also calls on them to ensure that organs of the press and groups which sponsor them refrain from encouraging any remark that might incite hatred or violence.

"The Security Council expresses its concern for the grave humanitarian situation in the field. In this context, the Council supports the activities of all United Nations agencies aimed at assisting the Ivorian people.

"The Security Council further condemns the hostile acts against United Nations personnel in Bouaké and Man on 24 and 25 October last, and recalls that all the parties are obliged, by resolution 1479 (2003), to cooperate with the special political mission established by the Security Council, the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), and to ensure freedom of movement of its personnel.

"The Security Council reiterates its full support for the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), France and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with a view to stabilizing the country and seeking a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Council welcomes in particular the recent initiatives of the Presidents of Ghana and Nigeria and the holding of a regional summit in Accra on 11 November 2003 to address security problems in the region.

"The Security Council commends the action of the forces of ECOWAS and France, and that of MINUCI, and pays tribute to the commitment and dedication shown by their personnel. It also welcomes the efforts of the United Nations Office for West Africa and of all United Nations missions in the region to coordinate their action in order to address regional issues in an appropriate manner. It expresses its intention to examine the recommendations by the Secretary-General on ways to facilitate peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2003/20.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

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Thursday, 13 November 2003, 10.25 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-61105 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Martin Dahinden, Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Dahinden to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and by Mr. Martin Dahinden, Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

I call first on Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): Today's debate on mine action comes at a timely moment: as you, Sir, preside over the work of the Security Council. Your country, Angola, has been among the countries most affected by mines; unfortunately, the presence of mines, resulting from war, continues today to claim victims and to hamper economic recovery, the distribution of humanitarian assistance and development efforts in a number of provinces.

We think with sympathy of all of your compatriots who paid a heavy price because of the scourge posed by mines. Today's debate is particularly appropriate since a Security Council mission has just returned from Afghanistan where the United Nations Mine Action Service — an integral part of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations — manages the largest mine action programme in the world. The mission was briefed at the Mine Dog Centre training facility in Kabul, and learned that in Afghanistan, 7,600 Afghans, 20 international staff and 200 dogs conduct mine action. It also learned that mine action is both an immediate humanitarian imperative and a precondition to reconstruction and development.

Although Afghanistan is one of the most severely mine-affected countries in the world, the mission learned that with current levels of funding, all high-impacted areas can only be cleared by 2007. A number of former combatants in Afghanistan participating in the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process, led by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, will benefit from mine clearance training that should enable them to help their countries and be economically self-sufficient.

In Afghanistan and in Angola, you can see the full range of mine action activities in progress: mine-risk education to the populations of affected areas, assistance to the victims of landmine explosions, surveying and clearance of mined areas, destruction of stockpiles, and advocacy efforts with military leaders to persuade them to abandon the use of mines, in compliance with the commitments undertaken under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty.

This is not the first time that the Security Council has acknowledged the contribution of mine action to international efforts to maintain peace and security. In August 1996, the Council discussed demining in the context of peacekeeping operations and focused on the need for internal coordination within the United Nations system, as well as the need to integrate mine action components into peacekeeping missions, when relevant.

Since the 1996 discussion, United Nations mine action has made remarkable progress. The United Nations Mine Action Service within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) and the Children's Fund (UNICEF) are the lead United Nations actors undertaking and coordinating mine action initiatives. UNDP supports national mine-action authorities in over 20 countries. UNICEF has responsibility for mine-risk education in 28 countries. And the United Nations Mine Action Service has overall responsibility for the coordination of United Nations mine action and the management of mine-action programmes in seven peacekeeping or humanitarian emergency contexts. The United Nations Mine Action Service supports initiatives in Cyprus through the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Eritrea through the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), and south Lebanon through the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), as well as in Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan.

Today the Security Council is going one step further by acknowledging the contribution of mine action to peacekeeping operations and to efforts to maintain international peace and security.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to offer a few illustrations of how this is being done in practice.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea and south Lebanon, mine survey and clearance operations are essential for the safe deployment of the peacekeeping mission, and enable the mandate to be carried out.

Mine action can help to build confidence during peace processes. In Cyprus, preparations have started, with strong support from UNFICYP, with cooperation from UNDP, to clear minefields from the buffer zone that divide the island. While the land has potential productive uses, the clearance programme is largely appreciated for its political value in helping to remove a symbol of division. In Sudan, mine action has brought together the Government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement in a unique cooperation to clear mines in the Nuba Mountains.

Mine action engages the parties to a conflict in humanitarian initiatives. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Mine Action Coordination Centre works closely with peacekeepers to obtain commitments from the parties to the conflict to refrain from the use of mines, to destroy stockpiles and to provide information on minefields.

United Nations mine action helps build peace and security in more than a dozen other countries or regions of concern to the Security Council. The United Nations is supporting mine action in Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Croatia, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Sudan, and Tajikistan.

Mine action is a dynamic component of peacekeeping operations and contributes to the way we plan operations and conduct our work.

The efficient execution of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' emergency operations requires early planning involving mine action specialists. Staff of the United Nations Mine Action Service recently participated in an early assessment mission to Liberia in advance of deployment of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

The Mine Action Service also provides information on the scope and humanitarian impact of the problems of landmines, unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war, which is included in all reports of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping operations to the Security Council.

Multidimensional peacekeeping operations now include child protection advisers, gender focal points and often, mine action coordination centres. Within DPKO, and in collaboration with other United Nations partners, we are working to provide cross-cutting training to these staff, and to their peacekeeping colleagues, to ensure that their roles are complementary and mutually supportive. Child protection advisers and peacekeepers should be aware of the objectives and content of mine-risk education efforts, for example. This briefing offers an opportunity for the Security Council to call upon a range of actors to undertake specific actions that can greatly enhance mine action in peacekeeping context. To this end, the Council may wish to consider and address the following issues in the course of its discussion this morning.

First, there is a strong normative framework on landmines, but an instrument that addresses unexploded ordnance and other explosive remnants of war would greatly facilitate post-conflict clearance

efforts. The rights of mine survivors should also be reflected in the new instrument on the rights of disabled persons being discussed in the General Assembly.

Secondly, parties to conflict should be aware of the important confidence-building role that mine action can play. The United Nations can ensure that Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, negotiators, moderators and facilitators of peace processes systematically receive the United Nations Mine Action Guidelines for Ceasefire and Peace Agreements. The Council could urge parties to conflicts to incorporate mine action into their discussions, whenever relevant.

Thirdly, peacekeeping troops can play an important role in mine clearance. This has recently been demonstrated in the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, where the mine action coordination centre tasks contractors and force assets to clear and prove roads in the Temporary Security Zone where recent mine use by unidentified groups has undermined the confidence of local inhabitants and posed an obstacle to the return of internally displaced people and refugees. The Council should also consider calling upon troop-contributing countries to train their peacekeeping troops to demine in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining has developed IMAS for the United Nations, and Ambassador Dahinden will tell us more about that.

Fourthly, mine clearance is an expensive undertaking. We need to ensure that it is systematically directed at the highest priority tasks. In that respect, systematic information gathering is essential for priority setting and cost effectiveness. Peacekeeping missions can collect information on the scope and impact of the landmine and unexploded ordnance problem using the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA).

With guidance from the United Nations, IMSMA was developed by the Geneva International Centre and has now been deployed in some 30 field programmes. Ambassador Dahinden will also tell us about IMSMA.

Fifthly, mine action can be an important part of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. I have already mentioned the process under way in Afghanistan. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the mine action coordination centre and non-governmental organizations are discussing the use of demobilized soldiers to conduct mine action.

Lastly, let me stress that there is a need for funds. Member States should be encouraged to provide adequate and sustained financial assistance for mine action, and thereby alleviate the suffering of populations affected by mines, unexploded ordnance and other explosive remnants of war.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is grateful for the leadership and support the Security Council has shown for the integration of thematic concerns into the mandates, staffing proposals and budgets of peacekeeping operations. I hope that, as a result of these briefings, Security Council members will continue to make use of the information on mines and unexploded ordnance contained in the Secretary-General's reports to the Council and to fully reflect mine action concerns in their country-specific deliberations and resolutions.

The President: I call on Ambassador Dahinden.

Mr. Dahinden (Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining): I am grateful and honoured, Sir, by your invitation to address the Security Council today.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) supports the efforts of the international community to reduce the impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance. It provides operational assistance, is active in research and supports the implementation of the Ottawa Mine Ban Convention. The Centre provides a wide range of services, such as advisory missions, training, evaluation and technical support, to mine-affected countries, donor Governments, the United Nations, other international agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Two areas of our work are particularly important to peacekeeping. They are information management and mine-action standards. Also relevant is a recently completed study on the role of the military in mine action, which was requested by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). Timely and accurate information on the threat of mines and unexploded ordnance is of vital importance for the conduct of peacekeeping operations and for enabling the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as for post-conflict reconstruction. Typically, a wide range of different

actors, such as the military, local authorities, international agencies and non-governmental organizations, need such information to pursue their tasks.

To be effective, it is critical to enable the different actors to collect and exchange information on the threat in a standardized way. It is also important to handle and share this information across the different phases of crisis management and reconstruction. Until recently, this has rarely been done in a satisfactory way. Over the past few years, working together with the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Geneva Centre has developed and made available the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). This is a computer-based tool for the standardized collection, storage, analysis and dissemination of data on the mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) threat. The system now runs in 36 countries or programmes and is mainly applied in post-conflict situations. However, it is very important for mine action that data handling be done in an interoperable way from the beginning. This is why the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations at its fifty-seventh session encouraged troop-contributing countries to make use of the IMSMA system.

In the peacekeeping context, IMSMA is today used by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus and the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara. It is also in use by the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and, of course, outside the peacekeeping context, in Iraq.

The Geneva Centre provides pre-deployment and post-deployment support for the IMSMA system, which is largely funded by the Swiss Government. Support includes training, technical assistance for system installation and set-up, the transfer of existing data sources to IMSMA, if necessary, and follow-up maintenance and support. As with any professional software, there is continuous development work underway, and the system is available in a range of languages. The ownership and control of the data is, of course, with the user.

It is encouraging to see that the military forces of an increasing number of troop-contributing countries are conducting IMSMA training programmes themselves, such as France, the United Kingdom and the United States. Likewise, most international mine-action non-governmental organizations are familiar with the system and use it.

Mine-action standards are another major and relevant area of work of the Geneva Centre. They are prepared, as members have heard from the Under-Secretary-General, under a mandate from the United Nations. The standards have two very important purposes. First, they help to improve quality in mine action and, secondly, they facilitate cooperation among the different actors. Since the standards have become widely applied, there is now a common terminology and shared conceptual thinking, and training and education have improved. In short, there is now much better interoperability and mutual understanding among the different humanitarian mine-action actors.

In his recent report to the General Assembly the Secretary-General recommended that

> "Countries contributing troops to peacekeeping operations with expertise in explosive ordnance disposal and mine clearance should ensure that operations are conducted in accordance with IMAS". *(A/58/260, para. 60 (f))*

The potential benefits for peacekeeping operations of the International Standards would be to improve interoperability among the engineering contingents of troop-contributing nations and to ensure that areas demined by them do not have to be cleared again at a later stage. Peacekeepers clear mines mainly in support of their mission. However, it is important that this work be performed according to agreed standards, and then recorded in a common format.

In the past, the mine action activities of peacekeeping operations have often been the origins of subsequent national mine action programmes, but those transitions could have gone more smoothly had there been agreed standards already in place. In cases such as Eritrea and Lebanon, where mine action activities are being conducted by a national authority in most parts of the country while other tasks are being undertaken by peacekeeping troops in a mandated zone, the need for common standards is even more critical.

In addition to the technical elaboration of the Standards, the Geneva Centre is about to expand its outreach and training programme, with the main effort directed towards helping mine-affected countries continue to implement the Standards. The Geneva

Centre also works closely with the military to disseminate the International Standards. As just one example, next week the Centre will be holding a workshop in Santiago at the request of the Government of Chile. Training courses and workshops have been held in the context of NATO staff officers courses, as well as through the Partnership for Peace programme. The Centre has recently conducted training on the Standards with the armed forces of Ukraine, to support their mine action efforts with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). As with the information management system, training on the International Standards has been conducted by a number of armies for their own use.

The most appropriate role for the military in mine action has been the subject of debate in both civilian and military circles for some time. At the request of UNMAS, the Geneva Centre has recently completed a study of that issue. The study found that military expertise in breaching minefields is not easily transposed to humanitarian demining, where nothing less than 100 per cent clearance is acceptable if land is to be returned safely to civilian populations. While the military are able to provide warnings to civilians about the dangers of mines and unexploded ordnance, they are not well prepared to undertake ongoing community-based awareness and education campaigns. In general, military peacekeeping troops have not carried out large-scale survey, marking or mine clearance operations.

In many countries, the national mine action response has been based around the military, although this has been found to be most effective when aspects such as priority-setting and quality control were under civilian control. The destruction of stockpiled mines by States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction has usually been completed successfully by their own military forces.

The recent global experience in crisis-management and peacekeeping operations has shown that all these emergencies involve a wide range of different actors. It has also proven that the overall success of an operation depends largely on the capability to manage a smooth transition to the post-conflict phase as the international military presence is dismantled. Information-management and international standards, and also a better understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the military in such situations, can significantly improve the effectiveness of mine action and can contribute to a smooth transition. That is what the Geneva Centre is committed to achieve in partnership with the United Nations, and we stand ready to assist as required.

The President: I thank Mr. Dahinden for his important briefing.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like once again to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of November, and to assure you of our full support. We are grateful to you for having organized this meeting on the importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations, an item that is of high priority in the maintenance of international peace and security.

I wish also to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Martin Dahinden, Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, for their detailed briefings, which provided additional information on the threat posed by antipersonnel mines and on the ongoing work to clear such mines and to help victims and countries afflicted by this deadly scourge.

We know from experience that the international community, and the General Assembly in particular, has a major political role to play in mine clearance. But, while the General Assembly has a political role in mine action, the Security Council bears the operational role through its peacekeeping operations. That is the context of our consideration of today's item, which gives us the opportunity to think together about the best way to tackle the question of mine action.

The 1997 adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction – which now has 134 States parties – and preparations for the convening at Nairobi, Kenya, in 2004 of the first review conference connote significant progress.

We welcome the outcome of the intersessional meetings: those meetings give the international community an opportunity to reaffirm its abiding commitment to eliminating all antipersonnel mines, to reaffirm its awareness of the humanitarian tragedy of

which they are a principal cause, and to further raise public awareness of the danger and of the advantages of acceding to the Convention.

The commitment of the United Nations is based on its six strategic mine action goals for 2001 to 2005 and is reflected in the progress that has been made towards their implementation, as described in the report of the Secretary-General (A/58/260). All of this merits our attention.

The work of the United Nations — in particular, that of the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, non-governmental organizations and actors from civil society — should be supported. In order to promote the exchange of information and experience, there is a need for internal coordination, not only within those bodies, but also between them and the other actors in the international community.

The cooperative relationship that has been established between the entities of the United Nations and universities, non-governmental organizations and civil society deserves our support. This synergy has allowed us to determine the nature and scope of problems posed by mines, to identify the obstacles to be overcome, to outline plans of action and to make recommendations towards more efficient global action.

Along the same lines, my delegation welcomes the establishment of the electronic mine information network, educational activities on the dangers posed by mines, the establishment of networks and information exchanges between mine-affected countries, actions undertaken in the mobilization of resources, legal measures to ensure compliance with the Convention, and assistance to victims.

The creation of the United Nations Mine Action Service within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations attests to the importance of this issue and to the Council's commitment, through the Secretariat, to finding a radical solution to the problem. We welcome the activities undertaken by the Service, in close cooperation with the relevant bodies of the international system. Such activities should be encouraged. Mine-action operations under way within peacekeeping missions should be consolidated and their experiences widely disseminated. Similarly, the endorsement by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action of a new series of International Mine Action Standards on the use of mine-detecting dogs, as is being done in Afghanistan, should be shared.

My delegation believes that we should consider mine-action requirements at the very outset of planning for peacekeeping operations and that troop-contributing countries should integrate demining into their training programmes, in strict compliance with international norms. We appreciate the decision of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group to develop guidelines for the integration of a gender perspective into mine-action programmes and we encourage the continuation of consultations on that issue with United Nations personnel on the ground.

We welcome the integration of mine action into peacekeeping, humanitarian and development programming and budgeting. In that context, we support the work of the Mine-Action Support Group to promote regular contacts between the United Nations and donors, as well as the management by the United Nations Mine Action Service of a database that updates the investments and resources necessary to efficient and planned mine action.

The issue of anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance is closely linked to conflict prevention and management and to peace-building. The statements of Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Dahinden were extremely important in that respect. In order to attain these interdependent objectives, we need to ensure compliance with international conventions, prevent the ongoing use of these weapons and, above all, eliminate those already deployed. At the operational level, medium- and long-term success will depend on integrating mine action into national and regional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration projects.

My country, the Republic of Guinea, is a party to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and will continue to strive to implement its standards, working with our partners in the international community in order to make anti-personnel landmines a thing of the past.

In conclusion, my delegation supports the draft presidential statement to be issued at the outcome of the debate. We remain convinced that the Security Council will strengthen its work for international peace and security by taking into consideration in its debates

the proposals and recommendations to be put forth at this meeting.

The President: I thank the Representative of Guinea for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting on the vital topic of the importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations. We hope that our deliberations will again draw attention to the humanitarian aspects of the problem. We also thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Dahinden for their useful briefings on this subject.

Demining activities have two dimensions, humanitarian and disarmament, both of which, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, are mandates of the General Assembly. The General Assembly has addressed these two dimensions in the past and adopted a number of resolutions on them. I reaffirm that mine action in peacekeeping operations in no way entails a transfer of responsibilities from the Assembly to the Security Council.

The significance of this subject lies in its link to the humanitarian dimension and to the number of casualties among civilian workers in peacekeeping forces. It is worth noting that demining is a long-term and dangerous undertaking; it may often take decades and require vast financial resources to complete, given the difficulties of action in this field, particularly the lack of minefield maps or the unwillingness of certain parties to provide them to the relevant demining agencies, as well as the special geographical characteristics of certain conflict zones.

The link between peacekeeping operations and humanitarian programmes is extremely important, since both are undertaken in the context of peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building. Here, I should like to commend the role played by the United Nations through its mine-action centres, which have done excellent work in the past two decades in many countries facing this problem.

Proceeding from its belief in this humanitarian role, my country — with the cooperation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and other Arab donors — has assisted brotherly Lebanon in removing mines from the liberated Lebanese territories that were planted by the Israeli occupation forces. Field assistance, expertise and training are being offered in order to help eliminate the mines and their catastrophic effects on civilians and the inhabitants of the affected areas.

This noble work must always be undertaken with sincere and tireless effort if it is to achieve its desired objectives. We hope for such a collective effort in order to achieve the best possible results, minimize the damage caused by this problem and avoid further humanitarian losses due to mines.

The President: I thank the Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to say that we believe that the Council's presidency has undertaken an excellent initiative in proposing this subject for our debate today. It is very useful to engage in collective soul-searching with regard to a problem that we are all aware is, on several levels, of crucial importance to the work carried out by the international community when it intervenes in crises. I would also like to welcome the excellent briefings given by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Ambassador Martin Dahinden, who has very clearly illuminated the various aspects of this subject.

Given the statements made by the two previous speakers, which I fully support — and especially many of the things said by the representative of Guinea — I shall confine myself to three comments.

First, it is clear from the briefings we have heard that the United Nations has taken stock of the problems and that mine action is today undoubtedly being mainstreamed into the culture of the United Nations. We can be particularly pleased at the fact that peacekeeping operations very much now reflect the crucial need for mine action. We have noted that the main peacekeeping operations, in particular the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, now include an important element dealing with mine action.

As the two previous speakers have done, I would add that the General Assembly is playing an important role in the work done by the United Nations in the area of mine action. Since 1998, mine action has been regularly addressed, followed up and expanded by the General Assembly. France welcomes the fact that the resolutions adopted in that regard, which have traditionally been introduced by the European Union,

cover all the work done by the United Nations in the area of anti-personnel mines. Those resolutions also provide a politically useful and legitimate context for peacekeeping operations. They have also highlighted the work of the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In that regard, I welcome the important role the Service is playing, in particular in the area of cooperation.

Secondly, it is also clear that, as always, there are areas where further progress could be made. I thank Mr. Dahinden and Mr. Guéhenno for pointing out some possible ways by which that could be done. I am thinking, for example, about what Mr. Guéhenno said regarding potential progress in the area of norms, the role of mine action as a confidence-building measure, the need to better train the troops that are contributed in mine-action awareness and, lastly, the issue of financing mine action. I would perhaps add one thing to that. We believe it to be altogether crucial that the Ottawa Convention be recognized not only with regard to its role in banning anti-personnel mines, but also as a tool to mobilize mine action at all levels, including in the area of demining. It is a fact that the Convention, which was in large part the result of work done by civil society, has played a major role in mobilizing efforts in the area of demining. For us, that is another reason to hope that all the major countries with an important role to play in peacekeeping throughout the world will accede to the Convention as soon as possible.

Thirdly, despite the major role being played by the United Nations — which, once again, we should welcome — it does not mean that Member States should not make their contributions and every possible effort in their national capacities. For its part, France is making a contribution through the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme, as well as through its bilateral cooperation. Our mine action efforts have in recent years taken place on almost every continent, including in Cambodia, Nicaragua, Kosovo and Croatia — not to mention Angola, which this year we will be providing with over $3 million as part of our bilateral assistance. In the context of our bilateral military cooperation, I should point out that we are endeavouring to develop demining training in many countries, in particular African countries. For instance, last spring France opened a regional training centre in Benin.

With regard to assistance to victims, we actively support the work done by non-governmental organizations, and in particular by Handicap International.

In conclusion, I would like to say that these activities must be carried out in close cooperation with the United Nations. In that regard, the work could include both official and unofficial efforts. I would like to say that we very much appreciate what is being done in the Mine-Action Support Group, which is now presided over by Germany. I salute the work it has done in that regard. I would also like to say that we believe it is very important that we in the United Nations are aware of the fact that the political geography of mine action has to be evaluated and frequently reviewed to fine-tune mine action in the field. It is very important to continue to work against the mass use of mines, such as was the case in Cambodia, Angola and other countries massively affected by anti-personnel mines.

It is also important to undertake perhaps more limited and sophisticated work that has greater political impact in the context of crisis management, as Mr. Guéhenno said. For example, in terms of confidence-building measures, it is important that mine action is given the importance it deserves in West Africa, where the problem is less widespread, because of its potential impact on crisis management. In that vein, we have been pleased at the importance attached to mine action in the peacekeeping operation in Liberia. We think that, generally speaking, this issue should be taken into account in the context of the entire subregion.

The President: I thank the representative of France for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Permit me at the outset to thank you for having convened the Council to discuss in an open meeting a matter as universal and timely for the international community as mine action. I am also grateful for the important briefings by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and by Mr. Martin Dahinden, Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The conflicts which the Security Council addresses in the exercise of its authority are usually of two types, and they generally cause great loss of human life, mutilation and suffering, in addition to material losses. These are, first of all, anti-personnel mines and, secondly, the proliferation of small arms

and light weapons. Mine action is therefore an essential element in peace-building in that, as practice has shown, it plays an important role in peacekeeping operations. Also, mine-clearance operations play a preventive role, which is of primary importance in terms of preserving the life and physical integrity of the personnel conducting peacekeeping operations and of the personnel engaged in humanitarian activities. But we also think of the local population, innocent women and children, who are very often affected.

Our experience has allowed us to develop, within United Nations policy, mine action initiated by the Assembly, and the role of the United Nations Mine Action Service is today part of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). During this time, many international instruments have been drafted and continually updated with new universal norms, such as the Ottawa Convention and Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, as well as mechanisms for cooperation and action to resolve these problems.

Chile has implemented these instruments and has also taken the necessary measures to fulfil its commitments proceeding from these instruments. Our country has, as a first step, eliminated its stockpiles of anti-personnel mines. In this regard, Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to communicate to you that last August we destroyed the last 59,000 anti-personnel mines stockpiled by our country's armed forces, complying two years in advance with Chile's obligations under the Ottawa Convention. From now on, our country's efforts, over a nine year period, will be aimed at planning the removal and destruction of all anti-personnel mines planted on national territory.

At present, our Government's efforts are also aimed at providing humanitarian assistance to mine accident victims and to local communities. We have worked efficiently to mark those areas that contain minefields, delimiting them and making them known. We have also broadly distributed pamphlets containing preventive measures for persons who have to transit through areas close to these marked fields.

Mine-clearance activities in our country are concentrated in a public commission with multisectoral participation, reporting to the President of the Republic. One of the main functions of the National Demining Commission is to propose policies, legal norms and plans for compliance with the Ottawa Convention, as well as to obtain resources to develop a national humanitarian mine-clearance plan which, as I have said, has been carried out efficiently and ahead of schedule.

We have no doubt that, from the present perspective of the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Security Council must include in the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as a regular and priority matter and whenever the situation so requires, mine action as well as action regarding other explosive remnants of war. Such action, in our view, should work towards the elimination of landmines, of unexploded ordnance and, in general, of other explosives remnants of war or conflicts because of their serious effects on the civilian population in particular, particularly children, humanitarian personnel and the personnel of the United Nations itself. This must be done in accordance with nationally and internationally agreed technical criteria.

We agree on the need to reiterate the serious dangers posed by mines and other explosive remnants and we believe that the Council should support the activities of the United Nations Mine Action Service in the DPKO, with special recognition being given to the work done by this Department in terms of coordination. We also believe that the Council, through its resolutions, should promote, among other things, respect by all Member States for the norms of international law on the subject, and we particularly urge the parties to a conflict to refrain at all times from the production, transfer, stockpiling and use of this type of material.

At such an important occasion as this, we cannot overlook the courage and dedication of the experts who have risked their lives and their physical integrity in mine clearance. Our country is proud of contributing effectively to mine-clearance activities as members of peacekeeping and mine-clearance operations, as we did in Nicaragua, and cooperating with other armies in the removal of mines, as we have done with Ecuador. We wish to pay tribute to all those who have become victims of this dangerous work while ensuring that innocent people do not fall prey to that scourge.

Allow me to conclude by pointing out that the Human Security Network, a group of countries of which Chile is a member, has anti-personnel mine action as one of its priorities. We therefore reiterate, on behalf of the group of countries who are part of the

Network, our endorsement of the inclusion, as a priority, of this aspect in the mandates of peacekeeping operations that are approved by the Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Chile for the kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I was away from New York when you assumed the Presidency of the Council, so now, even if somewhat belatedly, allow me to say how delighted we are to see you presiding over the work of the Council for the month of November. We are particularly delighted in doing this because your entire programme revolves around what we deem to be most precious: mankind.

My delegation therefore welcomes this timely initiative that you took in organizing an open debate on the importance of mine action in peacekeeping operations. That is surely a topical and relevant issue that, because of its many effects on people and on the future of countries emerging from armed conflicts, arouses very great interest, not only among such countries, but also within the entire international community. Cameroon, a country signatory to the Ottawa Convention on landmines, is very pleased at the opportunity to take part in this debate.

In that regard, I am pleased to congratulate Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on his outstanding briefing and the very useful information he has imparted to us. I should also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Martin Dahinden, Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, for his briefing.

Anti-personnel mines are despicable and inhuman weapons that strike indiscriminately and, each year, cause many deaths and injuries and horrible suffering for those who survive. The unacceptable nature of those weapons stems mainly from the fact that they strike in both wartime and peacetime and without any distinction. It also stems from the fact that they ravage civilian populations, particularly women and children — the innocent.

The consequences of these weapons have been denounced for years by the international community. Anti-personnel mines continue to kill and mutilate many years after the end of conflicts; they jeopardize peace-building and reconstruction efforts and therefore have harmful effects on the economic development of the affected areas. Indeed, landmines hamper the resumption of agricultural activities, prevent the return of refugees and displaced persons and put at risk the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations victimized by conflict, perpetuating the precariousness of their situation. Therefore, they can lead to a resurgence of tensions and even confrontations.

Such harmful effects of anti-personnel mines on the establishment of lasting peace and security in countries emerging from armed conflict justify, in our view, the efforts of the international community — particularly the Organization — to find appropriate responses to the multitude of problems posed by mines. Thus it has been proved necessary for the United Nations to take the initiative when peacekeeping operations are deployed as well as later on, in the post-conflict phase, to address the problem of landmines.

My delegation is pleased that, for several years now, mine action has been integrated into the Security Council's mandates for peacekeeping operations. That is the case with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mine action, led mainly by the United Nations Mine Action Service, comprises demining per se, raising mine awareness, educating people about risk reduction, victim assistance and activities to promote a total ban on anti-personnel landmines as well as the destruction of stockpiles.

Within the framework of peacekeeping operations, mine action therefore seeks to provide greater chances for peace and to promote a swift resumption of economic activity and a return to normalcy in countries affected by conflict. If implemented early enough, mine action has a greater chance to be effective and to attain the aforementioned objectives.

The success of United Nations mine action, however, depends largely on mobilization of resources, since the vast majority of activities are funded by donors' voluntary contributions. It is therefore imperative, given the scope of the problem, that donor sensitization and resource mobilization efforts be sustained. Here, Cameroon launches a passionate appeal to donor countries to provide adequate and

enhanced support to mine action in African countries emerging from conflict situations.

My delegation hopes that those concerns will be reflected and find a place in the draft statement that our discussion will only serve to reinforce.

The President: I thank the representative of Cameroon for the kind words he addressed to me.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): As this is my first formal opportunity to do so, Sir, I wish you every success in the presidency and promise you the full support of the United Kingdom. Like previous speakers, I am very grateful for the briefings that we have received.

We very much welcome the decision to convene this meeting. The need to do so was reinforced for those members of the Security Council who saw the substantial and courageous work being done in Kabul last week to get rid of the scourge of landmines in Afghanistan. Today's speakers have eloquently demonstrated that mine action plays a key role in underpinning peace processes and in assisting countries emerging from conflict by overcoming a serious and truly substantial risk to the whole process of post-conflict reconstruction.

The political, economic and psychological impacts of buried mines are very substantial. But, with approximately 15,000 to 20,000 landmine casualties each year, we clearly have a collective responsibility to take action and achieve effective, durable results. So it is reassuring to note today that there has been significant progress since the Council last considered this issue, in 1996. In particular, we have the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and a mine action policy which outlines the key principles of United Nations mine action — principles which have become the United Nations Mine Action Strategy for 2001-2005. In addition, thanks to our Canadian friends, the Ottawa Convention was a major step forward. And there have been other significant innovations, including the establishment of the Information Management System for Mine Action, which we heard about earlier; the United Nations operational framework for rapid response; and the Mine Action Guidelines for Ceasefire and Peace Agreements, as well as the work of the New York-based Mine Action Support Group, under the dedicated leadership of Germany, aimed at improving coordination of donor mine action activity.

We welcome — and indeed support — all those developments. They have helped to create a more strategic, systematic and coordinated response to mine action issues at the national and global levels. But those strategic developments must crucially relate to activities on the ground, and it is very welcome that mine action is being effectively integrated, or mainstreamed, as part of United Nations peacekeeping operations and mandates. As Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno recognized, peacekeeping and confidence-building are benefiting from mine action.

To give a few examples, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea was the first occasion on which a mine-action coordination centre was established as an integral component of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. We were pleased to contribute towards that effort by training Kenyan peacekeeping troops to conduct demining activities to International Mine Action Standards. Again, as the Under-Secretary-General pointed out, that training is basic to empowering peacekeepers.

The establishment of a United Nations mine-action coordination centre within the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), helped facilitate the effective cooperation and collaboration between the Lebanese national demining office and United Nations agencies, including UNIFIL. The result: dramatic progress, with over 33,000 anti-personnel mines cleared ahead of schedule.

The emphasis placed by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on clearing key strategic areas to increase the capability of the United Nations has resulted in the clearing of roads, airfields and civic areas, which has benefited the local population.

Those examples demonstrate the benefits that mine action can bring as part of a peacekeeping operation, especially in terms of peace-building and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. Those benefits include improved safety and security of United Nations workers, peacekeepers and affected populations, improved delivery of humanitarian assistance and access to vulnerable populations. Such action improves the environment for the safe return of refugees and improves opportunities through the availability of mine-risk education, thus enabling populations to better cope with the risks and to assist those that fall victim to mines. It should also bring

improved employment and income opportunities through the restoration of land for productive use. Improved economic development and opportunity to progress will contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Underpinning that is the psychological gain of removing an uncertain but real humanitarian threat to the population.

The wide range of benefits to be gained from mine action in the context of peacekeeping operations and the wide range of stakeholders involved in the process highlight the need for effective coordination at all levels. The United Nations Mine Action Service is uniquely placed to perform that task, which is why the United Kingdom is committed to supporting its coordination role. We currently provide $16 million of annual funding in support of mine-action activities, most of which is channelled through the United Nations. I think that $1.5 million of that goes to support the important work of the Geneva Centre, about which we heard earlier.

Finally, the United Kingdom looks forward to the completion of an agreed presidential statement, which is under preparation at the moment. It will be important in terms of highlighting the key issues associated with mine action for peacekeeping operations, assessing the progress we have made so far and identifying the way in which we can work together to move this agenda forward and tackle the large number of problems that remain.

Mr. Raytchev (Bulgaria): Allow me first of all to join others in commending you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting on an issue which, in our view, is of primary importance for the international community. I would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and the Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Ambassador Dahinden, for their well-focused and detailed introductory remarks.

Bulgaria fully shares the concern about the harmful and widespread impact of landmines and other explosive remnants of war on civilian populations, especially children, humanitarian workers and United Nations staff, and we recognize the long-term impact that landmines have on the achievement of durable peace, security and development. Landmines, unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war cause severe suffering and damage to the civil population and have dramatic economic and social consequences. They place a heavy burden on the affected countries and make their rebuilding even harder. That fact has been widely acknowledged by the international community, and international mine action is one of the priorities on the agenda of the United Nations. In this respect, I would like to point out that Bulgaria was among the first to formally accept and implement the principles set out in the Ottawa Convention, thus contributing to the abolition of a whole class of weapons with indiscriminate affects.

The issue of mine action is especially relevant for peacekeeping operations, because they take place in mine-affected regions and mines and unexploded ordnance seriously hamper the efforts of peacekeepers, as well as of humanitarian organizations, to render assistance. Bulgaria considers that the inclusion of mine-action requirements in peacekeeping mission planning and structure is of great importance for the adequate fulfilment of the mandates of the missions. We welcome the effective coordination of mine-action activities within the United Nations system and the important mandate of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The role of UNMAS in ensuring coordination of mine action throughout the United Nations system and the provision of support to multidimensional peace operations is, in our view, essential.

We also support the view that effective mine action requires the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and civil society to work in a coordinated manner, with the United Nations taking the lead role. It also requires a comprehensive approach combining mine clearance, stockpile destruction, victim assistance, capacity-building and mine-risk education.

Acknowledging the fact that the primary responsibility for the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance lies with the affected countries, we support the view, as put forward by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno in his statement, that peacekeeping personnel could assist in training local military personnel in demining activities, in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards, which have already been developed.

The role of peacekeepers is vital in providing mine-risk education for the population in the affected regions. Mine-risk education is, in our view, a key

component for the speeding up of social restoration processes.

In our view, the inclusion of mine action in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts is very beneficial for the communities affected. Former combatants could be employed in mine-action programmes, thus reducing the risk of diversions and involving the communities in determining mine-action priorities. Victim assistance is essential for the post-conflict reconstruction and economic recovery of the affected countries. The maiming of civilians poses a serious threat to the economic well-being of those countries. The development of programmes for social reintegration and the re-training of landmine victims should be an integral part of the mandate of peacekeeping missions. Last but not least, we think that sufficient financial resources are of vital importance for the conduct of mine-action activities. That is why enhanced cooperation between donor and recipient countries is needed. Countries in a position to do so could contribute to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight a few points which, in our opinion, are of particular relevance with regard to the implementation of mine action in peacekeeping.

First, we share the view that the dissemination of information is of particular importance.

Secondly, with respect to coordination and flexibility, the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre in Kosovo is a special case, but it has managed to encompass all major mine-action sectors in one homogeneous structure. In our view, that experience could be shared with other mine-action programmes, bearing in mind the fact that each situation is different.

Thirdly, concerning implementation, we think that we must continue to focus on progress in the field.

Fourthly and finally, concerning victim assistance, existing structures within the health and social sectors should be reinforced, and services and programmes aimed at mine victims should include all persons with disabilities, regardless of their cause. International organizations, donors and affected States should examine further ways of enhancing mine-victim assistance, including socio-economic reintegration.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Sir, my delegation joins other speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council and in particular for the initiative taken by your country, Angola, to convene this meeting of the Security Council on demining efforts and the question of anti-personnel landmines. Your country has been a mine victim, and therefore your leadership in ensuring that the Security Council addresses this issue is particularly appreciated.

My delegation wishes also to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno as well as Ambassador Dahinden for their briefings. We wish in particular to underscore the efforts made by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno to present to the Security Council at this meeting a set of proposals and suggestions to broaden the field of action, expand demining efforts and consolidate the normative framework in which the international community is working to combat the scourge of anti-personnel landmines.

We recognize the fundamental role played in that regard by the United Nations, which has made this issue one of its priorities in the context of its endeavours to bring about international peace and security and as part of reconstruction efforts.

We recognize also the role being played by the Geneva Centre, the United Nations Mine Action Service, and, in particular, the work of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Children's Fund.

Recently, as the Ambassador of the United Kingdom has pointed out, we witnessed, during the Security Council's mission to Afghanistan, the tremendous efforts being made in that country by the United Nations in support of demining and reconstruction. We were able also to take stock of the enormous social and human costs to Afghanistan associated with mines and mine victims, and the effort and expense involved for that country and the international community in eradicating that scourge.

We are convinced that the most effective means of preventing the harm done by mines is to bring about their total elimination. In that connection, Mexico participated actively in negotiations on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Four years have elapsed since those negotiations ended — negotiations in which Canada, one of the principal sponsors of the Convention, participated actively. Four years later, approximately 141 countries have acceded to that instrument. However, key members of the international community — whose contribution to demining efforts is essential — have not yet acceded to the Convention.

My country therefore wishes here to urge those that have not yet ratified or acceded to that Convention to do so, so that the international community may have at its disposal a general and universally applicable normative framework that very clearly establishes the commitment of all States to eradicate these weapons, whose principal victims are always innocent civilians.

There are also other instruments which the international community has established. We must continue to expand the normative framework, so as to have, at the international level, all the instruments necessary for bringing about the prohibition and eradication of anti-personnel landmines.

It is estimated that there may still be millions of mines in place, which hamper the development process and are responsible for between 15,000 and 20,000 victims a year. It is therefore very important for the Organization to redouble its efforts to proscribe those deadly weapons.

Mexico welcomes the fact that Kenya will host the First Review Conference of the Convention. It is significant that the Conference will be held in Africa, since the countries of that continent have been severely affected and have made an important contribution to eradicating the scourge of anti-personnel landmines, which, we are convinced, should be recognized by the international community.

Since 1993 the Security Council has made a great many statements with regard to the prevalence of mines in various areas of conflict throughout the world. In that context, it has been necessary, in the mandates of various peacekeeping operations, to include explicit references, provide for instruments and make concrete efforts to encourage demining activities.

Our country believes that activities in this area are essential to peace-building efforts. Mexico has actively participated in the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Mexico, together with other nations of our hemisphere, has participated in two demining processes in Central America. We strongly support the establishment on the American continent of a mine-free zone. We will continue to work towards that end and, under the leadership of the United Nations, to contribute to the efforts of the international community in this area.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): As I have not yet had the opportunity to do so, I too, Sir, would like to welcome your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to pledge the full support of my delegation. I would also like to thank you for convening this very important meeting. Mines are truly a scourge and are killing people every day. I just learned that today, six citizens of Chad and one German citizen working for a German non-governmental organization (NGO) were killed in an explosion related to unexploded ordnance disposal. We deplore the loss of life, and our condolences go to the bereaved families.

A few days ago we had the opportunity to learn of — and to see — the cruelties mines cause to human beings, when we met with mine-action experts in Kabul as part of the Security Council mission to Afghanistan. Mines make life unbearable for all: not just for those injured or mutilated, but also for those who have to live with the constant fear of falling victim to them. Mines hamper the resurgence of civilian life after conflict and thus prolong the war situation for the civilian population, sometimes long after hostilities have ceased.

Laying mines is one of the easiest things in the world to do. Finding and removing them safely, however, is a Herculean task that absorbs resources far exceeding the value of the mine itself. I have read expert estimates that an anti-personnel mine costs $3 to produce, but that its removal costs roughly $3,000. That is an unacceptable relationship — as mine laying is unacceptable anyway.

It is a great relief that the number of States signing and ratifying the Ottawa Convention is steadily increasing, thus enlarging the commitment to the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and the commitment to their destruction. However, even if the load of new mine-related problems may be decreasing, the burden of existing mine problems remains staggering.

You and your fellow citizens, Mr. President, know best what I am talking about, because Angola is

considered to be one of the most heavily mine-affected States in the world.

Mine action, which addresses a variety of mine-related issues, is a new concept that goes beyond the mere military and disarmament aspects. The authors of the Ottawa Convention were wise to establish a broad-based approach to mine action that also includes the humanitarian aspect. When dealing with mine action, the Security Council needs to ask where the Council comes into play. The hybrid nature of mine action does not seem to supply an easy answer.

In broad terms, after armed conflict the peacekeeping phase calls for demining in the interest of the resurgence of basic civilian life in former war zones, and in the interest of the security of the peacekeepers themselves. Demining and mine awareness may at that stage be the essential elements of mine action. And at that stage, the United Nations, especially the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), plays a key role in organizing and coordinating mine action. It is essential that peacekeeping missions be mandated and subsequently organized in such a way as to ensure that the necessary mine-action measures are taken from the outset. In other words, mine action needs to be on the checklist of items to be considered in any peacekeeping mandate issued by the Security Council.

However, as peace begins to be consolidated, the whole array of mine-action features is brought to bear. It is at that stage that, gradually and increasingly, actors from outside the United Nations come into the picture. These include NGOs as well as local and national authorities of the affected country. The role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is to help build local and national capacity to take over the role of coordinating the various actors in the minefields. To the extent that the number of parties involved in mine action is increasing, coordination is of the essence, and the role of each player must be clearly defined.

Another aspect is the distribution of roles between the Security Council and the General Assembly with reference to mine action. It is not my intention to prejudge the blue-ribbon Panel of eminent persons on the reform of the United Nations, but as I see it, the Council's role is basically to ensure that mine action is considered and, as the case may require, included in peacekeeping mandates.

The General Assembly, on the other hand, deals with mine action in all its aspects, thus responding to the report of the Secretary-General on that matter (A/58/260). Together, the report and the draft resolution on assistance in mine action which is to be submitted in the General Assembly within the next few weeks form an important basis for this discussion.

Germany has, from the outset, supported the concept of mine action. Former German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, together with his Canadian colleague Lloyd Axworthy, was one of the promoters of the Ottawa Convention. The German contribution to mine action, since 1992, has reached almost $106 million. Germany is a founding member of the Mine-Action Support Group formed by donor countries in 1997 with the objective of establishing a regular exchange of information and views with one another and with United Nations bodies such as UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF on mine-action activities worldwide.

One of the most important tasks of the Mine-Action Support Group is to help ensure adequate funding of mine-action projects. As Chair of that Group for the current year, I wish to seize this opportunity to appeal to all Member States inside and outside the Security Council that have the means to do so to lend their generous support to the cause of mine action.

The President: I thank the representative of Germany for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you and to wish you every success in the coming month. I also hail your wise initiative to bring this very important topic to the Council Chamber. I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Ambassador Dahinden for their presence here today. I fully agree with them that international mine action must remain one of the priorities on the international agenda because of the terrible humanitarian and socio-economic impact of mines and because they hamper the stabilization and development of countries in post-conflict situations.

Had there been any doubt about that, our recent trip to Afghanistan eloquently showed the vital

importance of demining in peace-building and national reconstruction. International action against this scourge can be completely effective only if it combines a balance of elements including the demining operations themselves, the destruction of stockpiles, victim assistance, mine risk education and active international advocacy for the total prohibition of mines. Beyond all that, it is vital to maintain an appropriate level of international funding, in particular in areas such as victim assistance. Increased responsibility on the part of local authorities for mine action should also be promoted.

Spain is firmly convinced that the terrible effects of mines for the affected societies should be fought through firm political and financial commitment and that mine action is an essential part of peace-building.

In terms of its financial commitments, Spain allocated approximately 1.5 million euros to its mine-action programme for 2002: 45 per cent for victim assistance, and 55 per cent for training programmes for humanitarian mine clearance. Indeed, it was Angola that was one of the main beneficiaries of that programme. In addition, my country has mine-clearance units in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Afghanistan. To that bilateral assistance should be added Spain's contributions within the framework of the European Union — which has committed 240 million euros towards mine action for the period 2002 to 2009 — as well as contributions within the context of the United Nations system, to which Spain has been a regular contributor.

In terms of its political commitment, Spain continues to promote the universalization and full implementation of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Within the framework of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects, my country will continue to support the adoption of binding international instruments governing unexploded ordnance and mines other than anti-personnel mines.

Inasmuch as mine action is an essential component of peace-building and confidence-building measures in conflict and post-conflict situations, the United Nations is called upon to play a major role, providing a global approach to mainstream that action into peacekeeping operations, humanitarian activities and development strategies. In that connection, Spain is grateful for and fully supports the continuation of the important work of the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in its role as coordinator of all anti-mine activities of the United Nations system and provider of technical support for those activities in the mandates, planning and implementation of peacekeeping operations.

On another issue, we feel it would be equally relevant for the Secretary-General, in addition to his annual mine action report to the General Assembly, to incorporate this item in his reports on general peacekeeping operations activities.

I do not wish to conclude without mentioning the gratitude of my delegation for the important contribution to the coordination of international mine action made by institutions such as the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, which is represented here today.

The President: I thank the representative of Spain for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation is grateful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and to the Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Mr. Dahinden, for their briefings.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the whole range of problems related to mine action. We support United Nations efforts to mobilize the international community to address the issue of the danger posed by mines. Russia is acquainted from bitter experience with the tragedy and suffering caused by the uncontrolled use of mines. Despite the fact that more than a half a century has elapsed since the end of the Second World War, Russia's Ministry of Defence and Ministry for Emergency Situations disarms tens of thousands of pieces of unexploded ordnance every year.

We believe it imperative that mine action remains a priority in peacekeeping operations in crisis areas. In that connection, we support the inclusion of appropriate provisions to that end in the mandate of peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council.

For its part, Russia is making whatever contributions it can towards mine action. Our peacekeepers, while fulfilling a critical peacekeeping task in the Georgia-Abkhaz conflict zone, are also conducting demining activities in that area. Unfortunately, more than 10 of our soldiers have died or have been seriously wounded as a result of mine explosions in that area.

Russia participates in a number of humanitarian mine-clearance projects, in particular, under contract with the United Nations Mine Action Service programme in Kosovo, where we cleared a territory of about 240,000 square metres. During work to rehabilitate the Salang Tunnel in Afghanistan, more than 4,000 mines and explosives were removed and disarmed. We are also prepared to participate in a practical way in mine-clearance operations within the framework of the plan of action for Africa, endorsed by the Group of Eight in Kananaskis.

In order to create a normative and legal basis for Russia's participation in mine-clearance operations, the Russian Government enacted a measure entitled "Measures to facilitate the Russian Federation's participation in international humanitarian mine-clearance programmes, projects and operations". That measure regulates the provision of assistance to other States in the area of mine action.

We support Angola's initiative to discuss mine action in the context of United Nations peacekeeping activities. We believe that the Security Council discussion of this question should focus on specific tasks that arise when carrying out peacekeeping operation mandates. At the same time, we believe that duplication of work by the various agencies and organs of the United Nations in this sphere should be avoided.

Since the General Assembly considers the matter of assistance for mine-clearance activities on a regular basis, we think it would be a good idea for the subject of providing assistance to mine-affected countries to be discussed in that body.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes this meeting and your initiative, Mr. President, in addressing the subject of mine action. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing, as well as to express our thanks to the Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, Ambassador Dahinden.

Landmines have been widely used as a means of warfare in conflicts around the world. Since the end of the cold war, the humanitarian problems arising from the use of landmines are receiving increasing international attention. In peacetime, some former conflict-stricken countries and regions continue to face the scourge of large numbers of landmines that remain from the wars and conflicts that have since ended. Those landmines hang over the heads of the local population like the sword of Damocles. They not only threaten the life and property of the population and impede the efforts of United Nations humanitarian relief and peacekeeping operations, but also hinder economic and social progress. This problem, if it is not addressed effectively, will undoubtedly undermine the international community's efforts to help the affected countries in their post- conflict reconstruction.

The humanitarian problems arising from the use of landmines have received great attention from the United Nations. The General Assembly adopted a resolution on this subject as early as in 1993. In August 1996, the Security Council dedicated a discussion to demining in connection with United Nations peacekeeping operations. In 1998, the United Nations published a document entitled, *Mine action and effective coordination: United Nations policy*, which elaborated on the United Nations responsibilities and role with regard to landmines, as well as the principles to be followed in mine action. In recent years, under the guidance of these principles, United Nations bodies have coordinated their efforts through a division of labour to help the affected countries solve the problems associated with landmines. In many peacekeeping operations, mine action has been regarded as an important component of their mandate. Missions such as UNIFIL, UNMEE and MONUC, among others, have, through mine action, made effective contributions to improving the humanitarian situation in the affected countries and regions, promoting their economic recovery and development, and bolstering the people's confidence in the peace process. We appreciate the positive efforts made by the United Nations in removing the dangers of landmines. We encourage the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other entities to provide a review of their successful experience and step up their communication and cooperation with the relevant countries, Governments, international organizations, and civil society.

China understands that the affected countries are mainly concerned with the humanitarian problems arising from the use of landmines. We have consistently supported the international community in its effort to solve this problem. As a State Party to the revised landmine Protocol to the Convention on Conventional Weapons, China has been implementing in good faith all provisions of the Protocol. Although China has yet to accede to the Ottawa Convention, we identify ourselves with the purposes of the Convention and support the ultimate goal of a total ban on anti-personnel landmines.

China has also been active in the area of international assistance for mine action. In 1998, China contributed $100,000 to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, which has assisted mine clearance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1999 and 2000, the Chinese Government cooperated with the United Nations in hosting in China two seminars on international demining techniques for seven mine-affected countries, namely, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia and Rwanda. In 2001, the Chinese Government provided to Angola, Cambodia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia and Rwanda, seven countries affected by landmines, mine detection and clearance equipment worth $1.26 million. In 2002, we also donated some mine clearance equipment to Lebanon. In 2002 and 2003, we dispatched two expert groups to Eritrea to train demining personnel and to direct on-site demining activities. To better participate in the international assistance activities in mine action and step up our demining cooperation with other countries, China joined the Mine Action Support Group based in New York this year. We are ready to increase our exchanges and enhance our cooperation with the United Nations and all interested countries in an untiring effort to help affected countries rid themselves of the scourge of landmines at an early date.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): First of all, my delegation would like to express our appreciation for your initiative, Mr. President, with regard to this discussion of the importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations. We have listened very attentively and appreciatively to the statements made by Under-Secretary-General Guehenno and Ambassador Dahinden. Pakistan is alarmed to see that there are still 200 million landmines stockpiled globally, almost half of them scattered in about seventy countries, completely unattended. Some 15,000-20,000 people fall victim to the indiscriminate use of such landmines every year. Seventy percent of the casualties are civilians, a large proportion of them women and children. Anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance pose severe economic and social consequences for the affected countries and place a heavy burden on economic and social reconstruction. Anti-personnel landmines also continue to prevent a large number of refugees in post-conflict situations from returning to their homes.

It would be useful to recall the substantive debate held by the General Assembly last week on the issue of assistance in mine action. The Secretary-General's report on this subject contained in document A/56/260 and Add.1 was most useful in that discussion. The annual review of the United Nations mine strategy, steered by the Secretary-General, also reflects a positive response from the global community. In particular, we have noted progress in implementation of the six strategic goals and related objectives, that is, increased information and improved information technology to create awareness, improved capacity to respond to emergencies, especially in the most affected countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, sustained efforts to build national mine-action capacity, significant improvement in quality management and coordination of mine-action activities, enhanced resource mobilization from donor countries, and increased advocacy in support of the relevant legal instruments.

One principle that requires universal acceptance and implementation is that of the responsibility of the States that actually place landmines or leave other unexploded ordnance behind in conflict situations. Until this principle is acknowledged and countries that are responsible for such actions are called upon to assume their responsibilities, at least to clear up these landmines, we believe that action will continue to be inadequate and slow at the global level. We have noted the priority issues, which Under-Secretary-General Guehenno has identified in his statement to the Council this morning, and we believe that this will provide a very useful framework for the Council's action in the future. We agree with the representative of Germany that the Council's role is principally related to the contribution that we can make in the context of conflict situations or post-conflict situations and in peacekeeping operations, where the Council obviously

has an important role to play in mine clearance, during and after conflicts.

It is quite clear in the context of the situations in which the Council is presently involved that we need to include mine-laying prevention and mine clearance as essential objectives in conflict situations, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in West Africa. Prevention in this case, as usual, is better than the cure, and it could be an objective that we could pursue in the context of the peacekeeping operations that the Council has presently under way.

Afghanistan presents a stark illustration of the tragedy caused by landmines. In Afghanistan, approximately 300 people are killed or injured every month by landmines and unexploded ordnance, and this has a history of over 20 years in that country.

According to the latest report of the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan,

> "Mines and exploded ordnance are an obstacle to the resettlement of the millions of internally displaced persons and returning refugees."

At the current pace of demining activities, the report acknowledges that Afghanistan could be cleared of landmines only after 10 years. Such an operation would require approximately $500 million. Therefore, we would urge the donor nations and agencies to accelerate their pace so that the demining period in Afghanistan could be shortened, paving the way for the early rehabilitation of the Afghan people and the return of the Afghan refugees to their country. Despite the strain on Pakistan's medical facilities, hundreds of Afghan mine victims are treated in hospitals and rehabilitation centres every year.

It is obvious that the main constraints on action by the international community is the paucity of funds; secondly, the application of the latest technologies in conflict situations and post-conflict situations for mine clearance; and, thirdly, the absence of a clear strategy for the rehabilitation of mine victims.

Being the largest troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Pakistan has actively contributed to the demining operations in several affected countries in the past. We have participated in the demining operations in Kuwait, Cambodia, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Western Sahara. We are also helping in demining operations in Lebanon, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Pakistan would be ready to provide training facilities to mine-affected countries.

In conclusion, let me recall Pakistan's unique record of clearing all mine fields after the three wars that were fought in South Asia, as well as during the recent military standoff with our eastern neighbour. There has never been a humanitarian situation caused by mines placed by Pakistan in the context of such conflicts. We remain committed to ensuring that mines in our military inventory will never become a cause for civilian casualties in Pakistan or elsewhere in the world.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I want to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this session today and for your leadership on this issue. I also want to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Ambassador Dahinden for their statements. It is important that the United Nations, the Security Council and our Governments as Member States keep the issue of mine action in our focus.

The United States recognizes the agonizing consequences that these hidden killers have on innocent people, whose lives and livelihoods are being shattered by devices like the land torpedoes left behind in more than 60 nations around the world from wars past. Humanitarian mine action can and should be about more than just clearing mines and other explosive remnants of war, such as unexploded bombs, artillery and mortar shells, rockets and grenades.

Also, mine-action efforts can and should play a vital role in furthering peace and stability. Cleared lands provide a physical environment that allows for national reconciliation, stability and economic development. Indeed, in addressing the horrific legacy of landmines and unexploded ordnance, we are not only helping to secure innocents from harm and restore land productivity, we are also providing something essential for communities ravaged by war, and that gives hope. Mine action encourages the hope that the future can be better than the past and hope that patterns of war and violence can be replaced with patterns of peace and prosperity.

Since 1993, the United States has dedicated over $700 million to humanitarian mine action and will provide approximately $100 million more in 2004 to some 40 countries. We are pleased that concerted efforts by mine-affected countries, as well as donor

Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, have resulted in significant progress towards a mine-safe world.

Since 1988, when the United States first engaged in humanitarian demining in Afghanistan, we have expanded our humanitarian mine-action assistance to more than 40 countries, helping to demine the most dangerous mine fields, train humanitarian deminers, provide medical assistance and vocational training to survivors of landmine incidents and their families, teach children and their parents to identify and avoid the threat, and conduct research and development into new technologies to detect and clear landmines more safely, quickly and efficiently.

Before the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, there were 10 million to 15 million landmines, over 2,500 minefields, 2,200 unexploded ordnance locations and thousands of abandoned munition sites in Iraq. Unexploded ordnance still present a tremendous humanitarian threat. United States assistance to Iraq began in 2002 with grants by the Department of State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs in the amount of $25.6 million for a three-year plan to cover mine-risk-reduction education and expansion of the Mine Advisory Group's operations and mine-action coordination and surveys.

The United States believes that we can most effectively help mine-affected countries by supporting sustainable indigenous programmes. Thus, we have established most of our programmes on a bilateral basis. However, we recognize the important role the United Nations system has in meeting this international challenge, and we are proud of our work with the United Nations system to help achieve these results. We salute the leadership of the United Nations Mine Assistance Service (UNMAS), the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the World Health Organization for their vital contributions to a mine-safe world.

We are also helping to strengthen mine-action centres abroad. The United States will continue to remain a leading proponent of efforts to mitigate the harmful impacts from the illicit use of landmines through our contributions to humanitarian mine action. The future of mine action and the complementary efforts to protect civilians from mines and other explosive remnants of war should be dynamic and fruitful. A great deal has been learned since the inception of humanitarian demining just over a decade ago. This accumulated body of knowledge will serve the world well in the future. The United States Government, Governments of donor and mine-affected nations, international organizations and the private sector together have created a formidable international network of humanitarian mine action. Working together, we can realistically set our sights on achieving a world where all children can walk the Earth in safety.

The President: I thank the representative of the Unites States for his kind words. I shall now address the floor in my national capacity.

First, I would like to express my thanks and deep appreciation to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his very good briefing and his leadership on this question of mine action.

I would also like to welcome Ambassador Martin Dahinden and to thank him for his very encouraging and comprehensive briefing on this important question, which helps the Council to take the necessary measures on mine action. Let me acknowledge our full support for the United Nations approaches and initiatives in raising awareness of mine-action problems, in developing rapid-response plans and in the building of capabilities at the national level in countries affected by landmines. We also appreciate the positive role played by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and we thank Ambassador Dahinden for his substantive remarks and the work done by his organization, attesting to the importance of greater interaction between relevant United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Mine Action Service, and non-governmental organizations acting in this field.

Mines and unexploded ordinance place serious constraints on the lives of millions of people and constitute a heavy burden on the affected countries, all of them recovering from war and struggling to rebuild their societies. Landmines also prevent large numbers of refugees from returning to their homes and severely hamper post-conflict reconstruction, economic recovery, social restoration and development.

We acknowledge that the primary responsibility for dealing with landmines and unexploded ordinance

lies with national authorities. However, due to the limited available technical and financial resources, landmine clearance plans — particularly in developing countries in conflict or post-conflict — tend to fall short of implementation. In this regard, the United Nations and its Mine Action Service can play a crucial role by promoting an integrated approach based on humanitarian assistance and development strategies, in the understanding that effective mine action requires a comprehensive and balanced approached combining mine clearance, the destruction of stockpiles, assistance to victims, capacity-building and mine-risk education.

Angola has experienced for too many years the scourge of war, and the challenges posed by mine-action policies under a peacekeeping operation and in emerging from a conflict situation are clear. The end of war made possible the first systematic national assessment of the landmine issue. I should like to share some figures with the Security Council.

Angola is one of the world's most affected countries by mines and unexploded ordinance. The initial set-up of a landmine impact survey began in December 2002. In 2002 and the first quarter of 2003, non-governmental organizations working in mine action reported the clearing of about 2.8 million square metres of land, the surveying of about 7.8 million square metres of land and the destruction of more than 5,000 mines and 13,000 pieces of unexploded ordinance. The Angolan National Institute for the Removal of Explosive Devices and Obstacles reports that, in 2002, around 600,000 people received mine-risk education.

In 2002, several countries and the European Commission made contributions to mine action in Angola of approximately $21 million — an increase of almost 100 per cent over mine-action funding in 2001. This was a welcome development and an immediate peace dividend, as it was made possible only by the end of the war in my country. It is also the result of Angola's accession to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Emerging from a conflict situation and facing enormous challenges in addressing its economic and social recovery, the Angolan Government has allocated an increasing share of the national budget to mine action. This stands at around $15 million for the 2003 anti-mine programme, which reflects the fact that Angola shares in a large measure the burden of the country's demining effort. Although the donor community continues to be an important provider of support in mine action, the fact that the Angolan Government is allocating a relatively important share of the national budget to mine action shows its will to comply with its commitments and its recognition of the importance of integrating mine action into the overall framework of emergency assistance, resettlement, social and economic recovery, and development strategies.

We are very grateful for the significant assistance provided by the international community, which includes bilateral and multilateral assistance through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, relevant United Nations agencies and the United Nations Children's Fund. For the year 2004, we expect to strengthen our cooperation with the United Nations system and the non-governmental organizations involved in mine action.

International assistance is a crucial element. For that reason, we appeal to the international community to continue providing adequate and sustained assistance in support of mine action, including through contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, for sustainable development and long-term security.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on assistance in mine action with a view to enhancing the quality of the United Nations mine-action work. The report shows how United Nations initiatives have provided valuable direction and guidance to all entities involved in its implementation and how it has fostered coordination and accountability across the mine-action community. We share the views outlined in the Secretary-General's report on the objective of the United Nations strategy to effectively integrate mine action into emergency assistance, resettlement, socio-economic recovery and development activities.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

A draft presidential statement on the theme of today's meeting is being negotiated at the expert level and we expect it to be ready for adoption by next week.

I call on Mr. Guéhenno to respond to questions and clarify points that have been raised.

Mr. Guéhenno: I should like first and foremost to express our gratitude for the expressions of support for the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service and of our partners in the United Nations system with regard to mine action.

We welcome in particular the recognition that mine action should be incorporated into the mandates of peacekeeping operations when appropriate. We also welcome the Security Council's appreciation of the role that mine action can play in peace-building efforts with regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration when former combatants are employed for mine action purposes.

I would note that mine action is indeed much broader than peacekeeping and the United Nations Mine Action Service, as noted in a recent report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly during a very important debate. I think that the integrated approach that takes place through the presence of the United Nations Mine Action Service in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations serves mine action well because it means that the kind of mine action that is undertaken in peacekeeping operations — that is, operational demining to facilitate the deployment of our troops — is done in a way that will make coordination with humanitarian demining most effective. Conducting demining operations according to international mine action standards and recording those actions in a standardized way through the Information Management System for Mine Action means that resources will be used in the most effective way and that the cumulative nature of any mine action effort, which unfortunately has to take its course over many years, will be done in the most effective way, ensuring that we do not repeat what has already been done. But that requires a very rigorous approach to mine action. I believe that the integrated approach taken by the Mine Action Service has promoted that and that it will make every effort to improve our modus operandi in the field in order to make even better use of the limited funds that exist for mine action.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for the clarifications he has provided.

I now give the floor to Mr. Dahinden, also to provide clarifications and responses.

Mr. Dahinden: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for your kind words. I would also very much like to thank the other members of the Security Council for their positive comments and references to my briefing and to the work of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

During this debate I have been particularly pleased that the international mine action standards that we are preparing under a mandate from the United Nations have been found useful, and that many comments have been made to the effect that they are being well applied.

Much of what I said might have sounded very technical to the members of the Council; but the objectives are of course not. This is about saving lives, permitting operations to take place properly, reducing human suffering and promoting social and economic development. I think we should not forget those things when we are looking at the more technical issues.

The President: I thank Mr. Dahinden for his further comments.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4859

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4859th meeting

Monday, 17 November 2003, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Trautwein
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Isakov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The responsibility of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security: HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-61602 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The responsibility of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security: HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping operations

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guehenno to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Piot to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Peter Piot. Mr. Guéhenno will give the Council an update on the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) in the context of peacekeeping, including accomplishments, challenges and lessons learned. Mr. Piot will brief the Council on progress made by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000), specifically with regard to its work with Member States and national armed services. He will also describe remaining challenges and areas where implementation must be advanced.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): I am grateful to the Council for this opportunity today to brief it once again on implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and to share with the Council our efforts and some of the challenges we face.

When I last reported to the Council on HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping about three years ago, we were all appalled by the estimates of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization regarding the spread of the epidemic. It was especially painful to realize that an estimated 3 million people died of AIDS in 2000, another 3 million died in 2001, and last year a further 3.1 million lives were destroyed by AIDS.

Despite our determination to face this challenge worldwide, the number of persons infected by the virus has continued to grow. In 2002, an estimated further 5 million people became infected, bringing the estimated total of persons infected — adults and children living with AIDS — to approximately 42 million. In and of themselves, these numbers are overwhelming, but we must not lose sight of the individual tragedies that lie behind them.

Resolution 1308 (2000) recognized the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on all sectors and levels of society. But its focus was on the vulnerability of uniformed services, international peacekeeping personnel and international civilian personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations. When we speak of peacekeepers, it is crucial to underscore that this includes civilian staff as well as military and police personnel.

In 2001, Mr. Piot and I announced that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) had signed a cooperation framework to work together on HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping. The technical and advisory support from UNAIDS has been fundamental to DPKO's response, both here at Headquarters and in the field. Based on contributions raised by UNAIDS from Denmark, DPKO has established an HIV/AIDS Trust Fund and we are most grateful for that contribution. All our efforts seek to reduce the risk of peacekeepers contracting or transmitting HIV while on mission.

(*spoke in English*)

One of our most concrete achievements is that DPKO now has HIV/AIDS policy advisers, supported by United Nations Volunteers, in four of our major peacekeeping operations — in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Timor-Leste, in Ethiopia and Eritrea and in Sierra Leone — and we will be recruiting an HIV/AIDS policy adviser for Liberia. It is our intention to deploy HIV/AIDS policy advisers in all major peacekeeping operations. We have HIV/AIDS focal points in six missions and are identifying others in our remaining operations. UNAIDS currently funds the position of an HIV/AIDS policy adviser working within DPKO headquarters. She is coordinating overall strategy and facilitating mission initiatives.

The importance of HIV/AIDS awareness training was underscored not only by resolution 1308 (2000) but also by the June 2001 Declaration of Commitment by the United Nations General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS. I would like to update you today on action we have been taking to strengthen existing training programmes and materials and to introduce new programmes where needed.

A primary element of our training strategy is the update and improvement of our training materials. The three publications, entitled "Protect yourself, and those you care about, against HIV/AIDS", "HIV prevention and behaviour change in international military populations" and "Policy guidelines on HIV/AIDS prevention and control for United Nations military planners and commanders" are being reviewed and simplified, in order to make them accessible to the broadest possible audience.

With input from some 20 Member States, DPKO has developed a pre-deployment training module on HIV/AIDS. Through the conduct of four regional seminars last year in Chile, Finland, Kenya and Thailand, we obtained feedback on this module from over 75 countries, including all major troop-contributing countries.

Together with UNAIDS, DPKO distributes HIV/AIDS awareness cards to deployed peacekeepers. The cards cover the basic facts about the disease and the United Nations Code of Conduct. They are currently available in 10 languages. It is our goal to see these cards become a standard feature of a peacekeeper's uniform. UNAIDS has recently launched a peer education kit for uniformed services, which DPKO will be distributing to our peacekeeping missions and to troop-contributing countries. We have also participated in a working group to revise the UNAIDS booklet "AIDS and HIV infection: Information for United Nations employees and their families".

HIV/AIDS awareness is a crucial component of the train-the-trainer courses organized and sponsored by DPKO to enhance national peacekeeping capabilities. It is also central to mission-specific pre-deployment training. Last month, for example, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo HIV/AIDS policy adviser participated in the training for Namibian troops being deployed to Liberia. The HIV/AIDS policy adviser for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea is currently assisting with a similar programme for Ethiopian peacekeepers.

To support in-mission programmes, there are now mission training cells in eight peacekeeping operations for military personnel. These cells work closely with the HIV/AIDS policy advisers and focal points to ensure that HIV awareness is included in induction programmes. Similar induction training is conducted for civilian police personnel. The HIV/AIDS policy advisers provide training for civilian personnel and civilian police. They also visit the contingents in the field, keeping step with troop rotations, and assist sector, contingent and unit commanders in designing ongoing awareness programmes.

Partnerships are fundamental to DPKO's response. In Sierra Leone, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) has joined forces with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to run HIV/AIDS prevention, gender and human rights awareness workshops for peacekeepers. In Ethiopia and Eritrea, the training-of-trainers course for peer educators has formed a new partnership with the local group Bidho, which means challenge, which is the only organization for people living with HIV/AIDS in Eritrea. That organization is facilitating training on discrimination and stigma.

Ninety-two countries currently contribute over 42,000 military personnel and civilian police. This presents an immense challenge to our efforts to make training culturally specific. It is therefore very important for troop-contributing countries to

mainstream HIV awareness in their national training programmes and to make use of the technical assistance offered by UNAIDS. It would greatly help us if — wherever possible — Member States could identify individuals already trained as HIV/AIDS peer educators. We could then build on their expertise to reinforce our own initiatives. With this in mind, DPKO is actively seeking police officers that have experience as HIV peer educators or coordinators, when selecting potential candidates for deployment.

It is also critical that we maintain high levels of knowledge and training skills among our key personnel dealing with HIV/AIDS issues. Last year, DPKO, in cooperation with UNAIDS, UNFPA and the United States and Norwegian departments of defence, convened a workshop on malaria, HIV/AIDS and related diseases in peacekeeping operations for senior mission medical personnel and HIV/AIDS focal points. A total of 20 troop-contributing countries were also represented. This year, the HIV/AIDS policy advisers were brought together for a training seminar in Sierra Leone. DPKO and UNAIDS are already planning a workshop for 2004.

But our efforts do not stop at HIV/AIDS awareness and training. Some of the behaviour that increases the risk of contracting or transmitting HIV, such as engaging in sexual contact with commercial sex workers, is unacceptable and damaging to the central mission of peacekeeping.

I wish to underscore again a point I made last month when I spoke to the Security Council on resolution 1325 (2000), regarding women and peace and security: the DPKO takes a zero-tolerance stance regarding sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeeping personnel. For example, updated disciplinary directives have been sent to missions, and reporting and investigation mechanisms are being strengthened. All personnel -- whether military, civilian or police — deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations are required to uphold the highest standards of integrity. We seek to work with Member States to ensure that those standards are met and that cases of serious misconduct are properly addressed.

Resolution 1308 (2000) also encouraged Member States to provide voluntary confidential counselling and testing as part of the preparation for participation in peacekeeping missions. Voluntary confidential counselling and testing were also endorsed by the UNAIDS expert panel on HIV testing in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

In 2001, during discussions focusing on the so-called post-Phase V Working Group, the Secretariat suggested that voluntary confidential counselling and testing might be more universally performed if the United Nations reimbursed troop contributors for the technical costs of conducting HIV tests, both before deployment and upon return. A number of Member States opposed that approach, and therefore it has not been formally pursued. It is the intention of DPKO to bring this matter before the 2004 meeting of the post-Phase V Working Group, and I very much hope that the necessary consensus can be reached at that time.

DPKO is introducing voluntary confidential counselling and testing capabilities into missions. Such counselling and testing have been available in Timor-Leste since February of this year. A voluntary confidential counselling and testing centre has now been established in our Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Mission recently held a two-week training course for HIV/AIDS counsellors; the 21 participants included military and civilian staff as well as United Nations Volunteers. The Mission in Sierra Leone is planning a similar training session. DPKO also just conducted an assessment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to assist in planning for voluntary counselling and testing facilities in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The effort will continue into 2004, when other missions will be assessed.

DPKO has also concluded a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Population Fund for the provision of reproductive health items. Condoms are now available to both staff and uniformed personnel in all missions. Post-exposure prophylaxis kits are held at our medical facilities for cases of occupational exposure to HIV and of rape. Screened blood supplies for transfusions have long been part of our mission medical support.

Our efforts focus not only on how to reduce the risks of HIV transmission, but also on how to capitalize on the positive potential of peacekeepers as agents of change. When we train troops in gender awareness, human rights and child protection, we hope to influence not only their own behaviour, but also their ability to recognize and respond to sexual violence and

exploitation. That is part of creating a more secure environment; it is central to our mandate.

Peacekeepers can also share their knowledge about HIV with the local population. In Sierra Leone, for example, troops have organized sensitization workshops, cultural programmes, sporting activities and dramatic presentations to increase the level of HIV awareness in local communities. HIV/AIDS policy advisers frequently include local groups in their training sessions. In the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), awareness programmes involve both contingents and the larger community. They target commercial sex workers, hotels, schools, youth and women's groups and local institutions. The Mission's work with the Eritrean and Ethiopian armed forces is the subject of the first in a series of UNAIDS case studies on engaging uniformed services in the fight against AIDS. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the HIV/AIDS policy adviser has worked with street children and local police. And in Timor-Leste, a six-week schedule of living testimony by an HIV-positive trainer included a special HIV peer education programme for the Timorese police force and local non-governmental organizations. The United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor is collaborating with Family Health International to ensure that that technical support continues. DPKO also includes HIV/AIDS awareness seminars in its training curriculums for local police forces.

I should especially like to acknowledge the very personal role played by the many United Nations Volunteers working in our missions, in reaching out to local populations affected by HIV and AIDS. For instance, in UNMEE, United Nations Volunteers have trained former commercial sex workers in tie-dye techniques to provide them with an alternative source of income. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations Volunteers held a fund-raising event with MONUC's Afro-Caribbean group. They raised money to cover school fees for children orphaned by AIDS.

DPKO is also working to assist host nations at the strategic level. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, the HIV/AIDS policy adviser is providing guidance to the national armed forces on how to mainstream awareness programming. All policy advisers are members of the respective host-country United Nations Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS. Those Theme Groups assist in the development and implementation of national strategies to respond to the epidemic.

Equally important, our strategy has been to reinforce support for the issue within DPKO. During a joint conference in New York, Force Commanders and Chief Administration Officers were briefed on DPKO HIV/AIDS-related policy and initiatives. Missions are also setting up HIV/AIDS task forces to develop and oversee implementation of programmes at the field level. In Ethiopia and Eritrea, such a task force has proved instrumental in maintaining the energy of the Mission's response.

How do we measure the impact of our efforts? How do we know that behaviour is changing? Reliable data on HIV prevalence rates rarely exist in conflict-affected countries, and we are not in a position to carry out epidemiological surveillance of peacekeeping troops. But DPKO is carrying out more systematic mission assessments. We are working with UNAIDS to set up monitoring and evaluation systems, using such tools as a knowledge, attitude and practice survey specifically designed for the environment of peacekeeping operations. UNAIDS and the United Nations Children's Fund conducted a survey on the implementation of the United Nations workplace policy on HIV/AIDS in order to identify and respond to shortcomings. Conducting a similar survey within DPKO will help us to further develop our learning strategy for staff.

We need to ensure that we have dynamic and responsive HIV/AIDS programmes for the entire duration of a peacekeeping mandate. Our efforts to date are only the initial steps in what we envisage as an expanding and constantly evolving programme. That will mean fully staffing and supporting the HIV/AIDS offices; it will also mean strengthening existing partnerships and building new ones within the United Nations, with host nations and with Member States. If we are ever to turn the tide on this devastating pandemic, statements of good intentions must be translated into concrete and sustained action on the ground.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his very comprehensive briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Piot: Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on action to implement resolution 1308 (2000), in relation to AIDS and security. I am particularly pleased to update the Council during Angola's presidency. As members are well aware, in many places the tragic legacy of conflict has been the spread of HIV. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is redoubling its efforts to work with Angola's leaders to ensure that the peace dividend in Angola does not become the casualty of a more insidious enemy — AIDS.

When the Security Council first considered the issue of AIDS in January 2000 and subsequently adopted resolution 1308 (2000), it reshaped the global landscape of the fight against AIDS. The Council's actions laid the groundwork for the prominence given to AIDS as a security issue in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly in June 2001.

Subsequent resolutions of the Security Council — 1325 (2000) in relation to women, 1379 (2001) in relation to children and 1327 (2001) concerning the Brahimi report — have all reinforced the determination of the Security Council to ensure that global responses to conflict situations address the AIDS dimension.

I must note with some regret, however, that the Security Council has not taken the opportunity to expressly address AIDS in a number of recent resolutions establishing and extending United Nations missions, especially given that some of these missions are operating in regions which already have major HIV epidemics.

Nevertheless, the resolve on the part of the Security Council has been integral to winning the support of national Governments in responding in a more concerted fashion to the threat of AIDS in the peacekeeping context. But more than that, it has opened the door to UNAIDS, working with defence and civil defence forces in many countries, and it also signalled a need to address the myriad ways in which AIDS undermines regional and human security.

UNAIDS has addressed AIDS and security in three ways. First, we have taken action in conjunction with Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in implementing the aspects of resolution 1308 (2000) which relate to peacekeeping forces, as we heard earlier from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno. Secondly, we are spearheading a wider response to AIDS among uniformed services. Thirdly, we are expanding the response to AIDS as a pre-eminent humanitarian and security challenge. Let me now consider each of those issues in turn.

First, as we heard from Mr. Guehenno, UNAIDS and DPKO are now undertaking a solid collaborative effort; I will not repeat what he said. As a result, working jointly we have been able to ensure that responses to AIDS have permeated every peacekeeping operation.

The full-time AIDS policy advisers in major peacekeeping operations work on a daily basis on HIV prevention and care initiatives at mission level and with United Nations theme groups on HIV/AIDS and the UNAIDS country officers in the context of the various missions.

We are also currently establishing a comprehensive information base for the targeting and evaluation of HIV activities among peacekeepers. We have produced an AIDS awareness card with a pocket for a condom. It has been produced in 10 languages so far, with Chinese soon to be added. We are now providing 50,000 cards per year to peacekeeping missions and to troop-contributing countries for use in pre-deployment training.

Responding to a debate in the Council, I established, in November 2001, an Expert Panel on HIV Testing in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, chaired by Australian High Court judge, The Honourable Michael Kirby, with the wide participation of uniformed services, as well as of DPKO. Its report has informed the formulation of DPKO policy, and I am heartened to see that DPKO is now clarifying its policy on testing to support the more extensive use of voluntary HIV counselling and testing in the context of peacekeeping missions. Earlier, we heard from Mr. Guéhenno about some of the details of the process, as well as about the achievements.

It is also true, however, that countries hosting peacekeeping missions are increasingly calling for the mandatory testing of peacekeeping troops. I remain convinced that this is a problem better solved upstream than downstream — that is, with sound policies in place, voluntary HIV testing should be a normal part of defence force operations.

While we have made undoubted progress in responding to AIDS as it has an impact on

peacekeeping operations, major challenges remain. First, as we heard earlier, we are still hampered by a lack of reliable data on the spread of HIV among peacekeepers and in conflict-ridden countries. UNAIDS is therefore ensuring that we have better baseline measures and the capacity to measure progress against them.

Secondly, AIDS responses among peacekeepers need to be backed up by concerted leadership. Defence ministers and chiefs of staff worldwide ought have AIDS on their radar screens to a greater extent. Thirdly, sustainability is a major challenge: peacekeepers are rotated through their missions in relatively short time frames, which makes it imperative that mission responses be reinforced in the ongoing programmes of uniformed services.

Let me now turn to my second point: the wider issue of AIDS in the uniformed services. Peacekeepers are drawn from, and demobilized to, national uniformed services. By working with uniformed services, in both troop-contributing and other countries, we establish the norms of conduct for uniformed personnel, and model effective AIDS response activities.

We are now working extensively with armed forces to ensure that HIV awareness and prevention takes place prior to deployment and that it is reinforced at demobilization. At least 38 countries worldwide now have a national strategy addressing AIDS in the uniformed services, which was one of the goals of resolution 1308 (2000).

UNAIDS — including our co-sponsors, especially the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund — is engaged in approximately 50 countries, working with young recruits, peacekeepers, police and immigration officers in the prevention of HIV and to strengthen HIV care. We have produced key tools — programming guides and a peer-education kit. Young recruits — both men and women — are a particular focus, because like other young adults, they are those primarily at risk.

One aim has been to institutionalize training on AIDS into training curricula for uniformed services. This has been achieved in Ukraine's defence forces, with support from UNAIDS and, in particular, UNFPA. Similar efforts have targeted border guards in West Bengal and military and police forces in Uruguay, and are beginning among law enforcement agencies in the Russian Federation and Belarus.

In order to allow wider lessons to be drawn, UNAIDS is publishing case studies of HIV prevention and care among armed forces and United Nations peacekeepers in Eritrea — as can be seen from the report that is before Council members — and it will also do so shortly in the case of Ukraine and Thailand. The results of that first study are both sobering and hope-giving. They have identified gaps for better action by all of us. We have also placed special emphasis on recruiting gender advisers in conflict and post-conflict situations, as members heard earlier.

Complementing the emphasis on uniformed services, we have intensified our actions targeting all United Nations system staff. The AIDS awareness card for peacekeepers, for example, is being adapted for use among all humanitarian workers, and the uniformed services peer education kit is serving as a model to extend HIV-related peer education to all United Nations staff.

Thirdly and finally, let me just mention briefly the wider context in which AIDS constitutes a threat to global security, as presaged in resolution 1308 (2000) — although it also extends further.

In the worst-affected regions, AIDS now constitutes a full-blown crisis of human capacity. It is profoundly exacerbating economic instability and food insecurity, and may even affect governance and lead to State failure. The coming generation of orphans will require unprecedented levels of support. Last month, the United Nations Chief Executive Board approved a plan, submitted by the World Food Programme and UNAIDS, for intensified United Nations system action on AIDS in Southern Africa — a plan that calls for an all-out effort combining longer-term development and emergency-type humanitarian support, because both are necessary today in those countries that are most affected.

While part of our action is directed at regions where the epidemic is newly emerging and therefore most containable, such as Eastern Europe and throughout Asia, we also need to attend to those States where AIDS has so eroded national capacity that massive and coordinated delivery of emergency

assistance for development is needed to stave off State collapse.

When the Security Council first considered AIDS in January 2000, it was truly breaking new ground. What the Council achieved then has been of lasting merit. It set in train a process which has enabled us to place peacekeepers and uniformed services in the forefront of effective global AIDS responses.

In the new year, I look forward to presenting to the Council a detailed progress report on results obtained in relation to resolution 1308 (2000). However, the extent of action among peacekeepers and uniformed services is already evident.

HIV represents a challenge to every one of the 42,000 soldiers and police officers under United Nations command. Many are serving in high-prevalence regions — a third are in Africa — and all face the strain of separation from families and of stressful working conditions. Unless the HIV challenge is met, the sustainability of those operations — and their invaluable contribution to global security — will be under threat.

But for the personnel involved, a peacekeeping mission is only a relatively small part of their career. We cannot rely only on HIV education efforts delivered in the context of peacekeeping operations. I urge Member States to ensure that all uniformed services, including future and returning peacekeepers, are able to participate in ongoing HIV programmes.

Our goal, pursued jointly with DPKO, is a simple one. We want to ensure that peacekeepers and all uniformed personnel are leaders in the fight against AIDS — as we just heard.

AIDS is not only the great moral challenge of our time. It is also a massive barrier to development, the cause of economic crisis, and a fundamental threat to security and to the basic stability of many nations. We thank the Security Council for the part it has played in recognizing and meeting that challenge, and look to its continued leadership in doing so.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I should like to begin by thanking you for having taken this initiative and Peter Piot and Jean-Marie Guéhenno for their respective briefings.

It is timely that we should have this discussion two years after the Council's last discussion on HIV/AIDS, when the Secretary-General's latest report on progress towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS — adopted at th special session of the General Assembly — makes such stark reading. Simply put, we are failing to tackle the global HIV/AIDS pandemic effectively. We know now that the 2005 targets set by the special session of the General Assembly will not be met. Yet, more than ever, we know what must be done.

This is unacceptable. We must bridge the gap between our knowledge and effective practice and implementation. Cementing the collective political will to achieve this is our challenge, and we must act quickly.

I have heard it argued that the Security Council has no business discussing HIV/AIDS, as though resolution 1308 (2000) did not demonstrate vividly why this pandemic affects international peace and security. People living in conflict are at greater risk of sexual violence. Demobilizing forces pose a particular risk. Military forces tend to have higher infection rates than civilians. If life expectancy is falling by a generation in a decade — let me repeat that: falling by a generation in a decade — how can that not be a threat to the security of the State?

The United Kingdom believes that the scale of the challenge demands responses from the different organs of the United Nations and from its agencies. It is not a question of who should act, but of whether collectively we all are doing as much as we can and as much as needs to be done.

Of course, there are institutional sensitivities around this issue, but HIV/AIDS, from the very beginning, has been a sensitive issue — sensitive for individuals, for families and communities; sensitive also for our Governments and for regional and international institutions. But not addressing it will not make it go away.

With that in mind, I believe that there is a fundamental question for the Security Council: can and should we be doing more to support the Secretary-General's leadership in combating the global emergency that is HIV/AIDS?

In addressing that question, I should like to make three key points today: first, the need for an assessment of the link between human security and HIV/AIDS; secondly, the need for more thorough monitoring and

evaluation of the progress being made towards implementing resolution 1308 (2000); and, thirdly, the need for substantive Security Council sessions to be scheduled in 2004 and 2005 to explore those issues further.

Before turning to those issues, I should like to say something about HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping operations in the context of resolution 1308 (2000). It is now widely accepted that a nationally owned, multisectoral approach is necessary for tackling HIV/AIDS effectively. Such an approach should include the civil and military security sectors, as well as the health, education and other relevant sectors.

But at the same time, we are placing greater emphasis on finding regional solutions to regional conflicts, including the deployment of peacekeeping troops from concerned regions. We know that, in some of the worst-affected HIV/AIDS regions, the infection rate in the general population can be as high as 37 per cent. But in some areas, we know that the rate among civil and military security personnel can be two to five times greater than the rate in the general population.

Not only does this pose a risk to national security and stability, it also undermines the potential for regional peacekeeping operations in the worst-affected areas. As a shrinking pool of adult workers is available, and as the number of orphans increases dramatically, it is not hard to predict a future in which many countries and regions will face severe difficulties maintaining their internal stability and increasing their global influence as they struggle to cope with the impact. All that undermines the potential for peacekeeping.

We therefore warmly welcome and endorse the work of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and others in supporting Governments in their efforts to develop national strategies for raising awareness and to develop training programmes and testing and counselling services for controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS among civil and security services.

I think that it is indeed encouraging to hear of the progress which has been achieved. It is essential that the work of UNAIDS and DPKO continue with the full support and backing of the Security Council. But we also believe that it is important that more work be undertaken to identify the scale of the problem and the impact of the response so far. Consideration of lessons learned will help us to identify what more needs to be done, by whom and when.

If I could turn to wider issues, I should like to quote the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, at the special session on HIV/AIDS in September, when he described HIV/AIDS in the following terms:

> "more devastating than any terrorist attack ... or any weapons of mass destruction ... as cruel as any tyrant ... AIDS can destroy countries and destabilize entire regions." *(see A/58/PV.4)*

The United Kingdom shares those sentiments. HIV/AIDS has enormous potential to unravel societies, destroy economies and roll back the development gains of the last 30 years. In the worst affected regions, and in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, it attacks the human resource base and erodes the institutional capacity that is vital to enduring stability and security. The recent food crisis in Africa is only one symptom of the effect of HIV/AIDS on human security.

The Security Council must be clear that it is fulfilling its potential in working collectively with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to ensure that the United Nations system's overall response is coherent, integrated and effective. Understanding more fully the link between human security and HIV/AIDS is a potential knowledge gap. We should act to close this. Only when our understanding of this issue is enriched through discussion and debate will we be able to pinpoint the full scope and range of the Security Council's potential role.

But we need to minimize the threat we have just heard about, to United Nations peacekeeping and to societies where peacekeepers are operating. Let us open ourselves to this challenge and in doing so provide a powerful incentive to action in support of the Secretary-General's leadership on this issue. I would like to make three specific proposals: first, that in 2004, on the basis of a progress report from the Secretary-General, the Security Council should hold a further discussion on HIV/AIDS to consider how we might strengthen our response to Security Council resolution 1308 (2000). Secondly, we should draw on the experience of UNAIDS, DPKO, civil society groups and others in order to offer a clear evidence base for the links between peace, security and HIV/AIDS and, crucially, with suggestions for action.

Thirdly, we should ask the Secretary-General to bring both strands together in a definitive assessment for consideration by the Security Council in 2005.

In conclusion, I would like to recall the Secretary-General's words to the General Assembly's follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session, in September:

> "We cannot claim that competing challenges are more important or more urgent. We cannot accept that 'something else came up' that forced us to place AIDS on the back burner. Something else will always come up. That is why we must always keep AIDS at the top of our political and practical agenda". (*A/58/PV.3, p. 3*)

Two weeks before World Aids Day, let us send a clear signal of the Security Council's determination to help the Secretary-General maintain HIV/AIDS on that front burner.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom, and particularly for the very good proposals he has advanced.

Mr. Cunningham (United States): I would like to start by commending you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000). This is a vitally important subject. I also want to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Mr. Piot for their updates, their statements and for their work.

It is clear that collectively we have accomplished a lot, but we can also see the need for strong continued joint efforts in the future.

Nearly four years ago, on 10 January 2000, we witnessed the very first meeting of the Security Council to discuss a health issue, HIV/AIDS. I recall very well that at first we debated whether we even ought to be addressing the issue and whether HIV/AIDS did indeed present a threat to international peace and security. In the end, the members of the Council reached agreement that HIV/AIDS merited the attention of the Security Council because HIV/AIDS threatens to kill more people and undermine more societies than any specific conflict we deal with in the Security Council. Indeed, how could it not be a threat to international peace and security?

Moreover, because HIV/AIDS strikes the young — young soldiers, young parents, young Government workers, young doctors and young teachers, it threatens the futures of many countries.

As United States Secretary of State Powell said in his remarks at the United Nations General Assembly special session in June 2001, "No war on the face of the earth is more destructive than the AIDS pandemic" (*A/S-26/PV.1*). Ambassador Jones Parry noted his comments to the special session in September 2003.

There cannot be any doubt that today, nearly four years after that first discussion in the Council and three years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000), that HIV/AIDS remains an urgent threat to peace and security.

Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) addresses the linkages among HIV/AIDS, peace and security. The last discussion held on the resolution took place in January 2001, nearly three years ago. Today we have heard from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) on the challenges of implementation and the progress made so far, and they do, indeed, have much to report — more than could be easily contained in brief oral presentations to the Security Council.

Much of what we have heard today is encouraging. It is good to hear of the strength and cooperation between UNAIDS and DPKO. We are pleased with the placement of an HIV/AIDS policy adviser in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. We note the significant progress this individual has made on implementing DPKO's responsibilities with regard to Security Council resolution 1308 (2000). We also note the placement of HIV/AIDS policy advisers and designational focal points in certain missions. They should be with all missions and I note Mr. Guéhenno's description of DPKO's intent to see that that they are.

We are also pleased to hear of the significant efforts DPKO is making with regard to awareness training. The HIV/AIDS awareness cards that were called for in January 2001 now represent a powerful potential tool in the education not only of peacekeepers, but also national and regional armed forces. They should be standard issue for all peacekeeping operations as soon as possible.

I commend Mr. Piot's personal commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) and acknowledge the contribution of the

Director of the UNAIDS office on AIDS, Security and Humanitarian Response. We commend UNAIDS for the work it has done in support of national responses to HIV/AIDS among uniformed services. This is essential to dealing with the problem, and they have done a lot of good work. We are particularly impressed with the document series entitled "Engaging uniformed services in the fight against HIV/AIDS, including the review of policy and programmes among peacekeepers and uniformed services". Members have some of the documents on their desks in front of them.

It is important to acknowledge that progress has been made, but so much still remains to be done. Mr. Guéhenno spoke of the key challenge of increasing awareness among participants in peacekeeping operations and local communities they come into contact with, about the causes of HIV/AIDS and how to prevent its spread. I noted his comments about the difficulty of working with 92 nations and 42,000 personnel in the field. This is certainly a daunting task, but UNAIDS efforts to work with national militaries are a key instrument in dealing with HIV/AIDS, as are the United Nations own efforts.

I also took note of what Mr. Guéhenno said about the need for more systematic mission assessments and the need for expanding constantly evolving programmes. That is certainly correct. In that regard we would be interested to know if it is possible to measure the relative success of HIV/AIDS focal points, as compared with that of HIV/AIDS policy advisers in the missions that have them. We are also gratified to see that there is now a full time position for an HIV/AIDS adviser and acknowledge the generosity of the Government of Denmark in funding the DPKO HIV/AIDS Trust Fund. We are concerned about what will happen with this position when funding runs out for it in 2004. I would like to ask if DPKO and UNAIDS have plans to establish a permanent position.

At the very highest levels my Government is totally committed to the global fight against HIV/AIDS. The United States is the largest donor of HIV/AIDS assistance, providing almost half of all international HIV/AIDS funding in 2002. We have bilateral programmes in over 75 countries, and in January President Bush announced a $15 billion five-year emergency plan for HIV/AIDS relief. In May that plan was signed into law with overwhelming congressional support. That represents the largest single commitment of funds in history for an international public health initiative on a specific disease. The plan continues our broad bilateral programmes, while focusing on 14 of the most afflicted countries in Africa and the Caribbean. The United States is also the single largest contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, with pledges totalling $1.6 billion. In addition, we are specifically committed to helping to implement resolution 1308 (2000) nationally and in our bilateral relations.

As part of the international partnership against HIV/AIDS in Africa, the United States Department of Defense has been working with African armed forces to help create policies dealing with HIV/AIDS within a military setting by developing prevention education programmes that reach both African troops and African communities, in order to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS among their personnel. Recent legislation expanded the programme to include global HIV/AIDS prevention among additional military services. Through this programme, our Department of Defense has helped selected armed forces to establish HIV/AIDS policies for their personnel, adapt and provide HIV prevention programmes, train military personnel to implement, maintain and evaluate HIV prevention programmes and assist countries to develop effective intervention into military culture to reduce high-risk attitudes and behaviours.

The United States also underwrote the preparation and printing of a United Nations training booklet on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention to be used by peacekeeping forces.

Within our own uniformed services, the United States military has a policy of mandatory testing. Each year commands are required to conduct a certain amount of mandatory prevention training, emphasizing avoidance of high-risk behaviour. And, significantly, initial training for military personnel on this issue is documented in their service records. My Government remains committed to pursuing the full implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) and we are exploring ways to making implementation more effective. HIV/AIDS is entirely preventable and by effectively implementing this resolution transmission among peacekeepers, national uniformed services and the communities they serve can be prevented.

I listened with interest to the proposals of my British colleague and would like to second his request

that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS submit a formal report to the Council next year, with the Council returning to this issue on a regular basis.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are most grateful to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to discuss implementation of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000). The meeting reflects your wisdom and we commend you on the competent way in which you have conducted the work of the Security Council. We are also grateful for the reports submitted by Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and by Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

HIV/AIDS has spread very rapidly since its first appearance and diagnosis in the early 1980s and has had an enormous social impact — becoming a global pandemic, which has caused over 24 million deaths. With the approval of resolution 1308 (2000), we began consideration of a new dimension in the AIDS problem: its multifaceted impact on stability and security. As indicated by UNAIDS,

> "In regions where HIV/AIDS has reached epidemic proportions, it destroys the very fabric of what constitutes a state: individuals, families, communities, economic and socio-political institutions, and the military and police forces which guarantee the protection of State institutions." (UNAIDS, Fact Sheet No. 1)

And as the UNAIDS report on Eritrea, which has been circulated at this meeting, quite rightly states, for a small country like Eritrea, AIDS "is an invisible enemy, which became a problem of national security". Moreover, it has also been determined that in conflict and post-conflict areas military personnel taking part in peacekeeping operations have a high risk of acquiring and transmitting AIDS. Research indicates that the changing nature of peacekeeping operations is a significant factor in this process. Indeed, over the last decade the role of troops in peacekeeping operations has changed. Now peacekeepers are required to become involved in a number of humanitarian areas that are not related to their military status proper. As indicated by a prominent expert, Dr. Tripodi, the risk of infection for military personnel increases when military contingents are required to intervene in complex emergencies. Those are often situations or countries where civil institutions have collapsed and therefore prevention of HIV becomes very difficult, if not impossible. In some countries where peacekeeping forces are deployed there is no such thing as a health ministry, or else it has disappeared.

Reports also show that constant and prolonged absence from family and military pressures lead to situations that tend to spread the disease. This is not to detract from the great success that has been achieved in using peacekeeping operations for humanitarian purposes in war or civil war situations, it is simply meant to point out the need to take additional precautions.

The UNAIDS report "On the front line" adds yet another dimension to the problem. The United Nations has developed a coordinated approach to implementing resolution 1308 (2000) on HIV/AIDS prevention during the conduct of its own peacekeeping operations, but apparently that approach does not apply when the United Nations is replaced by regional institutions in conducting peacekeeping operations, such as the NATO, the African Union, ECOWAS, etc.

In the case of Chile, our army has created a monitoring network with detection centres deployed around the country that have an infrastructure adequate for their operation, technical procedures and qualified personnel, all of which is part of a larger AIDS prevention programme. We have pursued the same goals in preparing our military personnel deployed to peacekeeping operations in post-conflict zones such as Timor-Leste, Kosovo or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, so that our training programmes have not only enabled our national forces to avoid contagion, but are also allowing them to help in educating some of the people of those countries about different methods of prevention, detection systems and treatment support.

We are, of course, prepared to make known the lessons we have learned in this process to any country interested in our experience in this field.

To conclude, let me express support for the recommendations made by UNAIDS and the report I have mentioned, and to request that on the anniversary of resolution 1308 (2000), in July of next year, a joint report between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UNAIDS be drafted, setting forth the advances in the implementation of this important resolution.

Mr. Isakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, and Mr. Piot for their extremely informative briefings.

We attach great importance to the coordination of international efforts, with a central role being played by the United Nations, to deal effectively with the most burning global challenges, one of which is undoubtedly HIV/AIDS. We believe that consideration of this issue is appropriate in the context of the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations. The global fight against HIV/AIDS requires firm political leadership, personal commitment and agreed specific measures, backed up by technical and financial resources. This was a point well made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia, Mr. Ivanov, when he spoke in September this year at the General Assembly's special session on the review of the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, which had been adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly in 2001.

The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council have already done a lot in elaborating an effective strategy to react to the spread of HIV/AIDS. We would also commend the practical work done in this area, primarily by UNAIDS, and also by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and a number of other agencies in the United Nations system.

A major role is being played by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who is constantly focused on this issue, who is personally committed and who was actively involved in establishing the Global Fund to Combat HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

From the very beginning, the Russian Federation has supported the idea of setting up that Fund; we helped in the organizational and legal arrangements and in its actual establishment. We have already contributed $4 million to the Fund and, in December, we plan to contribute a further $1 million out of the total amount pledged by the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Putin, namely, $20 million.

HIV/AIDS is a serious hindrance to development for States. This devastating epidemic gobbles up the resources and potential of countries and has a negative impact on the overall socio-economic situation, and in the final analysis, as in the case of any other serious global problem, it has a negative impact on international security and stability.

Given this context, overall consideration by the Security Council of this issue is quite understandable. The Council considered it in connection with the impact of AIDS for peace and security in Africa in January 2000, and in connection with peacekeeping operations in July 2000.

The President: I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General for this important debate.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express our appreciation for holding this meeting, which comes within the framework of international efforts to combat the spread of the AIDS epidemic, particularly concerning peacekeeping operations that exist in different parts of the world. What we aim for is to create awareness and to train the members of peacekeeping operations on the question of prevention of and dealing with this epidemic in order to contain it and to prevent its spread in the field. Allow us, Mr. President, to share your welcome of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his presence in our midst, while we discuss this very important item.

We would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for the information he provided on the implementation by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) of the relevant paragraphs on the matter contained in resolution 1308 (2000). We would like to indicate that awareness, training and commitment to the measures followed by the administration are in the final analysis part of the comprehensive international campaign to combat this epidemic and to put an end to it.

My delegation would like to express its admiration and satisfaction with the content of the report of Mr. Guéhenno concerning the measures to combat AIDS within the framework of peacekeeping operations, particularly since my country, beginning in 1974, hosts some 1,000 peacekeepers in the framework of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. We would like to thank Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS, for his statement, which contained basic points and facts that the international community has to take seriously into account in order to contain this epidemic. We would like to confirm that

the efforts of UNAIDS are basic and vital within the framework of international efforts.

The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and relevant United Nations agencies, particularly the World Health Organization, are basic to the ability of the international community to deal with this epidemic, taking into consideration the effect of this disease on stability and security in some countries. We would like to indicate here that international efforts and international cooperation are basic and necessary for pushing forward the positive steps that have been taken to date. We would like to express our appreciation for the efforts made personally by the Secretary-General Kofi Annan in this respect.

There is an urgent need to earmark more money at both international and national levels. There is a need to support the Global Fund to Combat AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and to provide medicines that are affordable to those infected, in particular in developing countries. We cannot forget the vital role played by non-governmental organizations, and national and international organizations that are active in this field. This contributes to reinforcing international efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. The document issued from the twenty-sixth special session of General Assembly on HIV/AIDS represents an important basis for the international community's combat against this disease. I would like to confirm that the elimination of this disease depends on cooperation among the countries of the world and on providing assistance to poor and developing countries in order to support their national efforts. This is by necessity linked to international, technological and scientific advances, which should lead to the provision of preventive vaccines, to better treatment and to the development of better medicines.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic was cognizant of the danger of this disease at an early stage, particularly for the armed forces, and it considered HIV/AIDS a main source of concern. In 1987, it established a national programme to combat HIV/AIDS. It set up a multisectoral, strategic national plan, which led to the establishment of a national committee on AIDS, that has made efforts in all fields, as mentioned in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

Thanks to the efforts of health authorities in Syria and the role played by private organizations and the social and religious institutions, the rate of the spread of this disease is very modest. In 2003, the National Committee to Combat AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases sought to achieve the following: enforcement of the commitment of all national authorities in efforts, national plans and educational and media activities to combat AIDS; reinforcement and development of capacities and national resources to combat AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases and to provide care to the infected; the integration of AIDS prevention programmes into reproductive health programmes, primary health care and school curricula; reinforcement of the role of health research and epidemiology studies; and the establishment of an AIDS database. We pay special attention to the question of increasing health awareness among individuals, particularly the armed forces.

Despite all that, the basic obstacles impeding national efforts to achieve the objectives of the Declaration of Commitment lie in the lack of financial and human resources to support the efforts made so far.

Finally, I wish to reaffirm once again that Syria is fully prepared to do everything possible to reinforce our collective effort to face this epidemic in order to guarantee a brighter and healthier future for humanity.

Mr. Trautwein (Germany): Germany welcomes the initiative by the Angolan presidency to organize this follow-up to Security Council resolution 1308 (2000). We thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guehenno, and Mr. Peter Piot of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for their comprehensive reports on the implementation of that resolution, and we welcome the Secretary-General and thank him for participating in this meeting and thus underlining the universal importance of this topic.

We would also like to recall Ambassador Holbrooke's personal involvement and advocacy role in highlighting HIV/AIDS as a global security threat, which was instrumental in putting HIV/AIDS on the agenda of the Security Council, as well as in drafting and implementing resolution 1308 (2000).

A lot has been achieved. Worldwide efforts to combat the epidemic have been stepped up significantly, but we also have to acknowledge that, despite these increased efforts, the number of HIV-infected people and those who suffer from AIDS is still growing, and there are worrying indications that

regions that had been spared the scourge are increasingly being hit.

The special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in June 2001 was a further major step in fostering support for the global fight against HIV/AIDS. Its outcome Declaration of Commitment sets a comprehensive framework for an effective response, including time targets for reaching certain goals and also with regard to the interrelationship between armed conflict and the spread of HIV/AIDS. This process must be closely followed up in the General Assembly and the Security Council. We therefore welcome the high-level meetings in the General Assembly on 22 September with many heads of State and Government participating. Other important initiatives such as the establishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the efforts of the World Health Organization must also be mentioned.

The Global Fund has developed into a very effective additional tool to mobilize desperately needed financial resources that could also be used for specific programmes called for by resolution 1308 (2000). In support, Germany has pledged €300 million to the Fund up to 2007.

We are encouraged to learn from the presentations of Mr. Guehenno and Mr. Piot that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UNAIDS have already implemented a number of concrete steps. They will allow, at the same time, the threat of HIV/AIDS spreading in conflict zones to be minimized and the local populations and deployed peacekeeping troops to be protected from infection. We strongly believe that mainstreaming HIV/AIDS training should be an integral part of every mission. We view resolution 1308 (2000) in combination with resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and resolution 1460 (2003) on children and armed conflict. All three resolutions are key components in setting up future peacekeeping missions.

In that respect, the recent negotiations on the creation of the United Nations Mission in Liberia were very encouraging. There is clearly an increased awareness in the United Nations system, as well as in the Council, that these three issues are closely interrelated and need to be prominently addressed in order to achieve long-term sustainable success for a peacekeeping mission. We also strongly encourage DPKO to continue its collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women on deploying gender advisers for conflict and post-conflict situations.

We fully agree with the key message of Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Piot that even more has to be done to reduce the risk of peacekeepers contracting or spreading HIV/AIDS. In that regard, and using the language of the Declaration of Commitment, my delegation would like to reiterate that prevention must be the mainstay of our response. We fully subscribe to the idea that peacekeepers and uniformed personnel can and must be leaders in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS. We therefore encourage DPKO and UNAIDS to continue to emphasize pre-deployment training, as well as continuous awareness and educational activities during deployment in high-prevalence countries, including through HIV/AIDS advisers.

We also wish to underline that the primary responsibility for selecting adequately trained personnel remains with the deploying countries. They must ensure that only peacekeepers who are aware of the risk of deployment in a high-prevalence country and who know the key precautionary measures are deployed. We all have to do more at the national level to strengthen HIV/AIDS awareness in our armed forces, particularly at a time when young people in many Western countries, including Germany, are less and less aware of the risk of HIV/AIDS infection. This, of course, includes increased voluntary testing before and during deployment.

We believe that, almost three years after the adoption of resolution 1308 (2000), appropriate facilities for voluntary testing should be an integral part of all peacekeeping operations. However, that does not always seem to be the case. In the summer, we learned, from the report on the visit of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not have testing facilities at the time. We are grateful for the information given by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno that that has since been addressed.

Finally, let me add my delegation's support for the proposal by various speakers that this Council take up the subject at a future meeting in 2004.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Mr. Piot for the comprehensive and detailed briefings they have just given. The briefings are particularly useful in helping us to gain a full picture of the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) and the challenges ahead. The relevant recommendations made by the speakers are also highly enlightening and merit the Council's serious consideration.

We welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at our debate today.

HIV/AIDS not only threatens human physical health, but also seriously impedes the economic and social development and stability of the affected countries and regions. It has become one of the contemporary world's most salient non-traditional security issues. In recent years, the international community and the United Nations in particular have paid increasing attention to the issue of HIV/AIDS. At the recent high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, countries reaffirmed their resolve and confidence that they will prevail over the disease. It is now an urgent imperative that we pursue effective action, further enhance cooperation and support and coordinate with the United Nations in these efforts. The Security Council can also play its due role in facilitating the resolution of this problem.

China welcomes the series of positive steps taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions, to increase HIV/AIDS prevention awareness among peacekeepers, to deploy policy advisers on the epidemic and to revise the code of conduct for peacekeepers. These steps will undoubtedly help to ensure the safety of peacekeepers and allow them to fulfil the Security Council's mandates with all diligence. We hope that the Security Council will continue to strengthen its coordination and cooperation with the relevant international bodies, allowing them to exploit the strengths of their respective comparative advantages and division of labour and to promote the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in the anti-HIV/AIDS campaign, in accordance with the timetable that has been set.

The Chinese Government has vigorously participated in international cooperation in the fight again HIV/AIDS. We have pledged $10 million in contributions to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. We are engaged in cooperation projects with the countries concerned and are actively exploring the possibility of cooperation with African countries. China is ready to continue to work with the international community in a tireless effort to reduce the risk and damages of HIV/AIDS and to promote common development.

Mr. Raytchev (Bulgaria): First of all, I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to you, Sir, for having convened this important meeting and for your contribution to putting the HIV/AIDS issue high on the agenda of the Security Council. I would also like to express our thanks to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and to Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS), for their comprehensive and enlightening statements.

I also take this opportunity to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, which is in itself a proof of the importance of the issue we are discussing today.

The massive and rapid spread of HIV/AIDS is truly alarming and a cause for justified concern. The epidemic causes tremendous human suffering, especially in those countries that lack sufficient resources for treatment, care and support. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is not just a health-care issue. It truly has demographic, economic, social and ethnical dimensions. The AIDS pandemic has become the cause of a severe development crisis that is destabilizing entire societies and posing threats to peace and security. My delegation fully recognizes — as reflected in Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) — that there is a clear link between the AIDS pandemic, peace and security. Movements of people resulting from conflict fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS, but the epidemic itself also causes social and economic crises that can threaten stability and security. Fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS is therefore linked to preventing armed conflict. It needs the coordinated response of all relevant United Nations bodies, including the Security Council.

Resolution 1308 (2000) addresses not only peacekeepers' health and the dangers of spreading the disease, but also their advocacy role as promoters of responsible behaviour. Bulgaria is convinced that peacekeepers can contribute to the work of prevention.

We welcome the ongoing discussions in the United Nations system on the ways in which conflict and humanitarian situations sometimes bring about an elevated risk of HIV transmission for refugees and host communities, as well as for the personnel of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in the field.

In this regard, we agree that there is a need for continued efforts to be made to implement the plans of action on HIV/AIDS that already exist. My country fully supports the goals set in the Declaration of Commitment adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session on HIV/AIDS. Bulgaria has implemented the major objectives of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS for 2003 and has pledged its political, civil and personal commitment to attaining the goals set for 2005 and 2010.

Bulgaria is fortunate to rank among the countries with low HIV/AIDS prevalence. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian Government has clearly shown that there is a strong political will and readiness to undertake the necessary actions to maintain the low HIV/AIDS prevalence in the country. Furthermore, my country considers national strategies to be crucial to coping with HIV/AIDS and encourages the development of long-term national strategies that include education, prevention, voluntary and confidential testing, and counselling. In 2001, the Bulgarian Government adopted a national strategy and a national action plan for prevention and control of AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases for the period 2001-2007.

We are well aware that national Governments have the primary responsibility for ensuring that peacekeepers are adequately trained and educated. In that respect, I would like to point out that Bulgarian military personnel receive regular training on all aspects of HIV/AIDS prevention. It is an established practice in Bulgaria to offer peacekeeping personnel voluntary and confidential counselling and testing. Bulgarian peacekeepers in the field are offered counselling and testing. Furthermore, focal points on HIV/AIDS are included for Bulgarian peacekeeping personnel. In 2003, a series of information campaigns on HIV/AIDS have been held for the Bulgarian armed forces. Bulgarian military personnel have taken part in education programmes on HIV/AIDS strategic planning in Monterrey, in the United States. In this regard, we would recommend that all nations that contribute troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations offer voluntary and confidential counselling and testing, both pre- and post-deployment.

My delegation commends UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for their efforts in the area of HIV/AIDS and peacekeeping. We note with satisfaction the broad approach taken by UNAIDS and the Department in addressing the HIV/AIDS problem with respect to military and civilian peacekeeping personnel, as well as to humanitarian workers and vulnerable populations. Bulgaria strongly supports the aforementioned approach and urges all United Nations bodies to cooperate fully and at all levels with UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic can be addressed appropriately only if the entire United Nations system acts on a global scale and in a holistic manner. Openness, global solidarity and firm political leadership are essential if we want to bridge the gap of stigma, discrimination and denial. The world is now facing a formidable challenge. It must stand up for the protection of human rights and dignity to successfully combat the pandemic of AIDS, a disease that is undermining the economic development and social prosperity of every affected nation.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I am grateful to you, Mr. President, for having organized this important debate under your presidency.

The Secretary-General has forcefully emphasized that the fight against AIDS must remain at the heart of our concerns. We unreservedly support the decisive effort he is making so that the United Nations devotes itself to that through every possible means.

Unfortunately, since the adoption of resolution 1308 (2000) in July of 2000, AIDS has continued to decimate entire populations. Generations of men and women have been struck down in the prime of life. Countless children have become orphans. Societies have been greatly destabilized and damaged. We know about the consequences of the pandemic on society, public administration and infrastructure — including health and medical infrastructures — agricultural production and education. We know that in certain regions, and particularly in Africa, the situation has become dramatic.

Nevertheless, there are signs of hope that lead us to think that the progress of the disease may perhaps not be an insurmountable inevitability. Awareness of what is at stake is now universal, as illustrated by the General Assembly's high-level meeting in September we are beginning to see an impact on our national policies of the progress we are making in international forums. I am thinking in particular of the implementation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the decisions of the World Trade Organization to provide the poorest people with access to medicines.

The fight against HIV/AIDS calls for exceptional mobilization, for which we are all responsible. We must redouble our efforts to meet the commitments we assumed together at the United Nations in 2001. The Council is aware of the commitment of France and of Europeans in this regard. The President of the French Republic reiterated as much during his address to the General Assembly last September when he spoke about what the Director-General of the World Health Organization has called a global health emergency.

The Security Council must continue to play its full part in this collective endeavour. We recall the important meeting held on 10 January 2000 devoted to the impact of AIDS on peace and security in Africa. Resolution 1308 (2000) is part of the follow-up to that meeting, and our first responsibility is to apply it rigorously. We must therefore regularly monitor the situation. In that regard, we are grateful to Mr. Peter Piot and Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for their tireless efforts and their quite comprehensive presentations. France is of course pleased at the measures undertaken and the activities pursued, as well as at the coordination demonstrated by all actors. That must be relentlessly pursued.

We are also working on this issue as it concerns us. The fight against HIV/AIDS infection is a priority of France's army. As the Council is aware, the French army is present in many areas especially affected by the pandemic. France is associated with the guidelines and programmes developed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). We have prepared national programmes based on long-term strategies that are in keeping with resolution 1308 (2000). Prophylactic measures based on a set of individual and collective steps — and essentially on the effectiveness of training, prevention, detection and voluntary confidential counselling — today constitute one of the most important aspects of training armed forces for peacekeeping operations. France will continue those activities. Of course, we will also continue to support the activities of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, DPKO and all others concerned. France is prepared to share our expertise and experience insofar as it can contribute to improving the coordination of our efforts. For its part, it is important for the Security Council to continue to follow up the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000).

Moreover, we are all aware of the geo-strategic stakes involved in the AIDS pandemic. This is undoubtedly one of the most fundamental and urgent threats that our world must face. In several regions AIDS hampers not only progress and development, but also peace and security themselves. In turn, violence and instability increase the risk of exposure to the disease. Combating AIDS must therefore become an important aspect of our efforts to prevent conflict and provide for the future of societies emerging from conflicts.

We know that United Nations agencies have quite often integrated this priority into their activities and programmes. That must become systematic — of course, while taking into account the specific characteristics of each situation. We must also continue to pursue our work with regard to the links between AIDS and peace and security. The Secretary-General could include a specific chapter on this subject in his annual report. I also note with interest the suggestion of my British colleague that a formal report be issued by the Secretariat in 2004 on the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000). Lastly, I would suggest that the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council together consider means of more effectively responding to these challenges. In that way, we would be augmenting our contribution to the essential mobilization in which we must all engage.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno and Mr. Peter Piot for the important and informative briefings they have given us on the dangers of HIV/AIDS, in particular as they relate to peacekeeping missions, and on the measures that should be taken to eliminate them.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic emerged in the early 1980s. Today it has not only become a public health problem: it is also a major challenge to development, which is essential to stability and international peace

and security. Africa — which is the continent most affected by conflict, underdevelopment and HIV/AIDS — must be the object of further attention, especially if one considers that most of the world's conflicts today are taking place in Africa, where there are several rather large peacekeeping operations.

HIV/AIDS weighs heavily upon the most productive and active sectors of Africa's population, particularly adults in their prime, scarce qualified personnel and women and children. The horrific waste in human and financial resources that is the result of AIDS makes AIDS a fundamental issue for Africa's security and development. According to official statistics, HIV is spreading in Guinea at a disturbing rate, with an average infection rate of 2.8 per cent. With respective infection rates of 7 per cent and 6 per cent, the mining and military sectors are the most affected. By geographical breakdown, HIV-infection rates are higher than the national average in the forested region of Guinea, where the gold and diamond mines and camps of Ivorian and Liberian refugees are located. The infection rate in the refugee camps is approximately 3.5 per cent. Those statistics, however incomplete, reveal the impact of war and social problems on the spread of the AIDS pandemic.

The campaign against AIDS requires the common efforts of Member States, that in turn requires more genuine and effective partnerships at the national, regional and global levels.

HIV/AIDS has become an unprecedented challenge for the United Nations and requires coordinated action and the adaptation of the work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. In that context, my delegation welcomes the creation by the Secretary-General of the Commission on HIV/AIDS and Governance in Africa, under the chairmanship of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa.

Moreover, it should be underlined that resources and access to medicines are basic issues that have to be dealt with. My delegation once again welcomes the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the World Trade Organization's agreement on generic drugs. The mechanisms to distribute funds and medicines to those who need them should reflect the urgent need for swift action dictated by this health emergency and threat to peace.

The convening of this meeting reflects the Council's concern to ensure follow-up of resolution 1308 (2000). My delegation believes that the battle against HIV/AIDS can be won only through decisive international cooperation on the part of the various actors of the international community. The Security Council acknowledged that when it adopted resolution 1308 (2000), which recognized the gravity of the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS and reaffirmed the need for coordinated international action to combat the virus. The resolution also recalled the Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and underlined the Council's concern over the scourge's potential negative impact on the health of the personnel of international peacekeeping operations, including support personnel.

In the context of international solidarity, it should be noted that the Millennium Declaration, the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS of the special session of the General Assembly in June 2001 and the outcome of the high-level debate of 22 September 2003 to follow up implementation of the Declaration of Commitment — these are all sources of inspiration that, fortunately, have led to new alliances and partnerships to combat HIV/AIDS.

For its part, the Security Council must provide peacekeeping operations with the tools necessary to find solutions for the deep structural impact of HIV/AIDS on their ability to promote peace and security.

Positive actions that should be supported are the incorporation of HIV/AIDS inquiry and work groups into peace missions and host populations, the appointment of HIV/AIDS advisers and focal points in the major peacekeeping missions, the appointment of advisers in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the development of prevention and advising strategies, support for national initiatives to assist uniformed personnel, the recruitment of gender advisers and initiatives in countries with high infection rates, as mentioned in the report submitted to the Security Council.

My delegation welcomes the arrangements made for better cooperation between DPKO and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), as mentioned in the briefings. We should now draw

lessons from past experience, assess the progress made and plan for the future with perseverance. To that end, we believe that the two bodies should share their experiences and strengthen their cooperation with other partners, including Member States, non-governmental organizations, civil society and other bodies of the United Nations system. Such synergy will undoubtedly enable us to better assess the nature and extent of the problems posed by HIV/AIDS, to identify the obstacles to overcome, to create specific action plans and to make recommendations for more effective global action in combating this scourge in the context of peacekeeping missions.

My delegation believes that the issue of HIV/AIDS should be incorporated into the initial planning of peacekeeping missions and that troop-contributing countries should include an HIV/AIDS component in their personnel training. The United Nations should contribute assistance in that regard.

In brief, the campaign against HIV/AIDS must be incorporated into the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in order to strengthen security and stability in regions of crisis and in post-conflict situations.

In peacekeeping operations, as a complementary measure, it is essential to create better systems for keeping statistics in order to follow up and assess progress made and to strengthen local and regional technical capacities.

My country, one of the leading troop contributors, continues to draw lessons from its participation in peacekeeping operations. Thus, through its national policy on HIV/AIDS, the Government of Guinea has, in its education component, emphasized prevention and counselling among military troops and police units. The personal involvement of national authorities, in particular the First Lady of the Republic, in the military communities and police camps, especially with the wives and children of soldiers and police officers, is an initiative worthy of mention.

My delegation believes that the involvement of ministries for defence and security in national mechanisms to combat AIDS will contribute to the better coordination of national initiatives to fight HIV/AIDS. Moreover, host countries, particularly countries with high rates of infection, should organize programmes to fight this scourge.

Winning the battle against AIDS in not only a moral imperative — a service to the millions of people infected or affected in one way or another by its devastating impact — it is also an issue of political and humanitarian urgency if we wish to fulfil our aspirations for peace, security and development in solidarity. That is why my delegation attaches the greatest importance to the Council's debate, which reflects the Council's firm commitment to meeting the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS, a great and unprecedented threat to life and the security of humankind.

Mr. Pujalte (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and Executive Director Mr. Peter Piot, of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), for their briefings on the actions taken to implement resolution 1308 (2000).

The AIDS epidemic has become a global emergency, threatening security, peace and the economic and social development of all countries, not only those located in the affected regions. It is not strange, therefore, that there are countries that consider this disease, AIDS, as the principal threat to their security. In Africa alone, this disease has caused more deaths than all of that continent's recent conflicts taken together.

Combating AIDS requires a response based on collective action through international cooperation. Controlling the disease is in itself complex and difficult and becomes even more so in situations of conflict, which generate refugees and are the cause of institutional breakdowns, the collapse of basic health and education services, erosion of the social fabric, interruption in productive processes and forced internal displacements of persons. It increases the number of cases of sexual abuse and prostitution and generates violence, chaos and destruction. All of these factors, as indicated by Mr. Piot in his briefing, create conditions conducive to the accelerated spread of AIDS and other contagious diseases. Military personnel, whether regular personnel or peacekeeping personnel, are not immune to contracting and spreading this disease.

In this context, Mexico believes that it is appropriate to have named an advisor on AIDS in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and to create centres for coordination on AIDS in the

missions. My delegation believes that the Council should continue cooperating and devising measures within the framework of resolution 1308 (2000) to reach the goal of reducing the spread of AIDS by the year 2015, as laid out in the Millennium Declaration.

It is important that the Department continue to encourage States, within the framework of a full respect for human rights, to supply voluntary and confidential counselling and testing services to all peacekeeping personnel, both before and after deployment. My delegation is also aware that these kinds of services, due to their high cost, exceed the financial capacity of developing countries that supply troop contingents for peacekeeping operations. Therefore, Mexico urges all Member States concerned to enhance international cooperation between their competent national organs to supply assistance in the development and implementation of policies for prevention, testing and treatment of AIDS for the personnel to be deployed in such operations. The operation of the HIV/AIDS Trust Fund in the DPKO, with contributions from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), to support the development and execution of AIDS programmes is a good example of those joint efforts that we should encourage.

In Mexico's view, an avenue to be explored is the development of a plan of action with concrete strategies for peacekeeping operations in cooperation with health organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In such a plan, we could contemplate the following endeavours: direct technical cooperation with affected States, including epidemiological analysis; development of educational materials and AIDS-monitoring reports addressed to the population; development of prevention strategies; promoting research on AIDS epidemiological trends in affected countries and their neighbours; promoting technical cooperation between missions with AIDS components and affected countries to promote an exchange of experience and of lessons learned; and strengthening vigilance in countries that may be vulnerable and are on the agenda of the Council.

Mexico has assumed an active role in combating AIDS. Recently, together with nine Latin American countries, we negotiated an agreement enabling us to substantially reduce the prices of medication and laboratory tests. Based on recent World Trade Organization agreements, Mexico will promote the production of high-quality generic medicines of proven quality for the population that needs them in less developed countries.

Similarly, my country is convinced of the importance of regional and international cooperation, and we therefore offer the capacities of our public institutions to train staff in health care, to share our cumulative experience and to provide technical consultants in designing indicators enabling us to evaluate the impact of the epidemic and the global response to it.

To conclude, Mr. President, Mexico would like to request the Secretary-General, through you, to submit in July 2004 a report on the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000), containing specific recommendations for strengthening the instruments available under that resolution.

Ms. Menéndez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, my delegation would like to congratulate you on again including this important matter in the programme of work of the Council. As has been said by other delegations, reviewing the process of implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) is something that we have not done for over two years.

Other delegations have referred to the relationship between AIDS as a threat to peace and security and its devastating impact on the societies of countries affected by it. My delegation agrees with those comments, but, for the sake of brevity, I will now focus specifically on the question of the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) in Spain.

Resolution 1308 (2000) urged Member States to develop national strategies over the long-term for education, prevention, testing and voluntary confidential counselling and treatment for their personnel in connection with HIV/AIDS as an important part of their preparation to participate in peacekeeping operations.

Spain, through its Ministry of Defence and in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, has developed a yearly programme of prevention on HIV/AIDS in its armed forces. That programme works in several areas. Among them we would emphasize the following: education, through campaigns and information days addressed to military personnel to educate them on the mechanisms of transmission of the disease and on measures of prevention; training, through the updating

and continued refining of military health personnel's education regarding HIV/AIDS; epidemiological activities designing programmes and surveys for epidemiological monitoring of HIV/AIDS infection and the identification and prevention of high-risk behaviours; and finally, prevention, providing to Spanish personnel who are to be deployed in peacekeeping operations, as part of their individual health equipment, preventive materials for preventing HIV/AIDS. With these activities, Spain has endeavoured to fulfil what was laid out in resolution 1308 (2000) in this very specific but important area, facing the enormous challenge raised by AIDS.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that Spain's commitment in the light of this challenge can be seen not only in this sphere, but also at the domestic level, through the national anti-AIDS plan, and at the international level, particularly through Spain's contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which currently totals nearly $50 million.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): At the outset, I wish to express my delegation's appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this Security Council meeting on the implementation of resolution 1308 (2000). Pakistan, as the leading troop-contributing country, attaches great importance to the Council's deliberations today.

We thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), for their comprehensive briefings. The two presentations have given the Council insight into the normative and operational implementation of resolution 1308 (2000) and the developments that have taken place since its adoption. That accords the Council an opportunity to review and advance the implementation of the resolution.

The adoption of resolution 1308 (2000) was a significant development in the context of the work of the Security Council, in that it was a recognition that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is also exacerbated by conditions of violence and instability. The Council acknowledged the existence of a nexus between the proliferation of armed conflicts and the spread of HIV/AIDS. The movement of people resulting from conflicts fuels the spread of the disease. That underlines the need for the Council to ensure prompt and effective responses to crisis situations. Conflict prevention and resolution should therefore be the first line of defence against the spread of the epidemic in conflict situations.

At the same time, the resolution reflected the possible role of peacekeeping personnel in the spread of HIV/AIDS. Perhaps it would be pertinent to know the number of peacekeepers who have caused the infection or have contracted it in the course of their assignments. We wonder whether a computation has been made to determine the proportion of the spread of the epidemic caused by peacekeeping missions vis-à-vis the overall global spate of the pandemic. A note of caution: we should not demonize peacekeepers in the absence of clear data, as that may project a misleading picture of the problem.

The conduct of United Nations personnel, particularly peacekeeping troops, should always be unblemished and beyond reproach. Deploying peacekeeping personnel who may be carriers of sexually transmitted infections is unacceptable; their risky behaviour with civilians under their protection is more objectionable. United Nations personnel who endanger the lives of civilians debase the noble traditions of humanitarian work and the United Nations itself, bringing both to disrepute. Troop-contributing countries should take severe disciplinary measures to prevent such a situation from occurring. There should be zero tolerance of those who, instead of protecting their charges, expose them to life-threatening dangers.

We expect the United Nations and the troop-contributing countries to set the highest possible standards for the conduct of the troops deployed under the United Nations flag. Every effort must be made to ensure that peacekeepers conduct themselves according to appropriate codes of conduct and that they adopt the best possible behaviour to protect and care for themselves and the populations with whom they may interact.

The principles of the code of conduct for humanitarian personnel developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and UNAIDS strongly discourage sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries. The role of uniformed personnel and peacekeeping forces in preventing the spread of the disease in conflict areas is extremely important. Resolution 1308 (2000) recognized that personnel,

before their deployment in peacekeeping operations, should undergo education, voluntary and confidential testing, and counselling and treatment. To that end, it is essential to improve the capacity of peacekeepers to become effective advocates and actors with regard to awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission.

Pakistan, as the leading troop-contributing country, is fully aware of the heavy responsibility we undertake when we deploy our troops in peacekeeping missions. We are generally proud of our record, which has remained unblemished in the dozens of United Nations peacekeeping missions we have served. Our soldiers' behaviour in the field is enshrined essentially in the noble traditions of their religion, which teaches them respect for women, the elderly and children. Their training — besides giving them mastery in the art of war — instils in them a sense of self-discipline. Still, before we deploy our troops in United Nations missions, every soldier is tested for HIV/AIDS and is provided with effective orientation and training on HIV/AIDS. Happily, Pakistan is not the only country with such scrupulous standards; most of the other troop-contributing countries enjoy similar reputations.

Finally, resolution 1308 (2000) recognized the importance of a coordinated response to the pandemic. In that regard, we welcome the joint efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS in addressing HIV/AIDS in conflict areas. We assure them of our full support in implementation of the resolution.

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative of placing the important issue of HIV/AIDS on today's agenda. I should also like to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Peter Piot for their detailed and instructive briefings. The presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, a short while ago is proof of the importance of the issue we are discussing and of his interest in the fight against the pandemic.

Security Council resolution 1308 (2000), whose implementation we are reviewing today, gave rise to a series of measures necessary to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS in urgent conflict and humanitarian situations. In particular, they involve education and training measures — to be provided to peacekeeping operations personnel before their deployment on the ground — in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention, screening and treatment. We therefore welcome the progress that has been made, but note that much remains to be done in this endeavour, which appears to be long-term. All that is clear from the briefings by Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Piot.

The AIDS pandemic feeds on conflict and population shifts caused by conflict. Among refugees, women and girls are most exposed to HIV/AIDS infection. We share the view that training of humanitarian and police personnel in methods of protection concerning HIV/AIDS prevention are initiatives that should be continued.

Since it emerged two decades ago, HIV/AIDS has spread quickly throughout the world. However, two thirds of the 42 million people infected with the virus live in Africa, where the epidemic is spreading at devastating rate. The scourge of HIV/AIDS is threatening the survival of the entire population of the continent, but it is affecting in particular adults of working age, which in turn is aggravating social problems and leading to a tragic increase in the number of very young orphans. Furthermore, it is leading to a worsening of the economic situation. The countries most affected by the epidemic in Africa have seen a notable drop in their rate of growth. In addition, in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, almost half of the armed forces and the police are infected by HIV/AIDS. Law and order are thus threatened within those countries, as well as from outside.

The impact of HIV/AIDS is clear and devastating: it is hampering the development of the continent of Africa and its future. At the national level, policies aimed at prevention must therefore be further developed. Access to treatment must be progressively increased and voluntary HIV testing centres must be set up. That is something that Cameroon is doing for civilians and for the army and the police, including in barracks.

We believe that prevention must be the main pillar of the international community's struggle against this scourge. This is a collective struggle in which the United Nations must continue to play a increasingly important role.

My delegation fully endorses the recommendations made by UNAIDS, and we also agree with the views expressed here today about the need for a joint evaluation report by UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

In conclusion, I would like to remind members that the HIV/AIDS pandemic does not respect borders and that its elimination will require international solidarity. As the Secretary-General said a few months ago, we must combine our political will, mobilize our resources and adopt specific measures in order to ensure a future for the world. That is our only option if we are to meet this challenge to the future of the human race and ensure human rights for all so that all peoples can flourish.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Angola.

I should like to start by expressing my appreciation to Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and to Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), for their comprehensive briefings on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) — an important step taken by the Security Council in addressing the AIDS pandemic and responding to the international community's great concern about this very sensitive issue.

The goals set out in the resolution of ensuring responsible and safe behaviour among humanitarian staff and peacekeeping troops and promoting their awareness of preventive measures, as well as the call for increased collaboration among national organizations and those in uniform and the integration of their activities into broader national responses are, in my delegation's view, important strategies for the achievement of progress in the global fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

We commend the efforts of United Nations bodies, and in particular the ongoing commitment of the Secretary-General, in the fight against AIDS. In this context, the creation of the Global Fund was a far-reaching initiative.

We also commend the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS to strengthen international cooperation aimed at formulating multisectoral and multifaceted responses to meet the challenges ahead.

The AIDS pandemic is a health, development and security issue. Because its impact is mainly on young people, it has a devastating effect on reproductive health. It has consequences for all levels of society — families, communities, the productive sector and nations as a whole.

The Southern African Development Community Summit on HIV, held in Maseru, Lesotho, in July 2003, noted that the impact of the pandemic in the region is having consequences at the social and economic levels, on families and on food security, and adopted a global strategy to combat AIDS through the prevention of new infections and the mitigation of the effects of the disease.

Angola has a rate of HIV infection of about 5 per cent of the adult population — a relatively low rate when compared with other countries in our region. That relatively low rate of infection is due mainly to the reduced movement of the population during the long years of war. Now, given the situation of peace and increased population mobility, the danger has arisen of an explosion in the rate of infection. This situation calls for a determined Government policy and will require the support of the international community in order to ensure that Angola can benefit from achievements made elsewhere to contain the pandemic.

In this regard, I would like to assure the Council that the issue of HIV/AIDS is at the top of our list of concerns and priorities and under consideration at the highest level of Government. Translating this commitment into reality, the President of the Republic, in line with resolutions adopted at the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, the Durban Conference and the 2001 Abuja Conference, has taken the lead in the fight against the pandemic in Angola by coordinating the National Commission to fight HIV/AIDS.

A special fund has been established to fight AIDS and the other major epidemics. The national strategy has been reformulated in line with the new challenges resulting from the attainment of peace. The response to new challenges include, among other actions, the intensification of education and prevention programmes, better treatment, including the provision of antiretroviral therapies, better care and assistance for orphans and vulnerable groups and advances in the fight against stigmatization and discrimination.

Many nations are facing increased difficulties in recruiting for the armed forces with a view to ensuring their national defence. The AIDS pandemic became a serious national security problem with unforeseeable but surely very grave consequences for many countries.

Global mobilization to face that tremendous security threat is an imperative to which my country fully subscribes. The Angolan armed forces have been specifically targeted in the national strategic policies to fight AIDS. We are counting on this effort with the assistance of the United States Department of Defense under the premise that we must run faster than the epidemic. Under this cooperation programme, massive testing of uniformed personnel is being conducted. An AIDS prevention plan among the military has been established. Information and education campaigns are being set up and condoms are being freely distributed. The armed forces have been taking a leading role in information and education campaigns of vulnerable groups with military personnel being trained as educators.

An enormous challenge lies ahead for Angola. However, a determined prevention programme has been set in motion and we are sure that it will bear positive results in the near future if the Angolan military continues to benefit from sustained international assistance — the programme sponsored by the United States Department of Defense being an exemplary model for other international partners. This programme is working and producing tangible results in the fight against the AIDS pandemic in Angola.

The Angolan authorities have expressed a willingness to participate, particularly with the Angolan armed forces involved in peacekeeping operations. The awareness campaign that we are conducting can be characterized by this objective: to ensure that the standards for the Angolan armed forces are in line with the standards set for participation in peacekeeping operations.

To conclude, it is our conviction that success in the fight against the AIDS pandemic depends on international cooperation and on practical and effective steps that all States should take to implement the commitments on HIV/AIDS. The pandemic is spreading at an alarming speed. It is a threat to survival in a large number of the most affected societies and a threat to security. We must run faster than the pandemic if we are to succeed.

I now return to my position as President of the Security Council and I would like to give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno to respond to some of the comments and suggestions made by the members of the Council.

Mr. Guéhenno: Let me at the outset thank all the members of the Security Council for the strong support they have expressed for our efforts and the joint efforts we conduct with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Let me also thank the members of the Council for their own national efforts. Several Council members have described the programmes they have developed for their national military. These programmes are very important for us. Peacekeeping often occupies just a moment in a military career; therefore it is essential that the partnership that I was describing become part of the programmes that are developed at the national levels, apart from what happens within the context of peacekeeping. Those programmes provide the background and foundation for an effective effort once troops are deployed in a peacekeeping context.

The issue of data has been raised by several delegations. I think we have to recognize that, unfortunately, there is still a general lack of reliable information on HIV rates in conflict and post-conflict countries. As one would expect, statistics are particularly weak in countries that have been afflicted by severe conflict. That makes it very difficult to judge the exact impact of a peacekeeping operation on national HIV prevalence. We believe this is an area where we have to make progress. That is why we are developing survey tools, with UNAIDS, such as the knowledge, attitude and practice questionnaire that I mentioned in my briefing. We believe that this will help us evaluate, with greater accuracy, the levels of awareness and risk practices in the field and also the levels of efficiency and effectiveness of our own programmes. That will also allow us to answer one of the questions raised by Ambassador Cunningham, namely, comparing the respective impacts of focal points versus HIV policy advisers. HIV policy advisers have so far been deployed in missions that were bigger than the missions where the focal points have been deployed. As we gather more statistics we will be in a good position to assess what are the most effective programmes that we conduct and also the most effective structures that we deploy in the field.

Focal points usually are medical personnel whose work covers a range of medical issues, and HIV/AIDS is one of those issues. Obviously they probably cannot have the same impact that a full time HIV policy adviser can have.

Ambassador Cunningham also raised the issue of the question of what would happen to the Headquarters HIV/AIDS policy adviser who is presently funded thanks to a contribution from Denmark, raised by UNAIDS. The existing funding will cover the post until December 2004. I think this gives us time to discuss with UNAIDS how to pursue what we consider a very important and useful function in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

Let me conclude by saying that I think this discussion shows how important it is for us to have a very close and practical interaction with the Security Council and with the troop-contributing countries on the question of HIV/AIDS. We will not be successful against this devastating pandemic if we do not join our efforts and closely coordinate. Working in isolation will not succeed, but if we work as a team, I think we have a chance to succeed.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his clarifications, as well as his good suggestions. I now give the floor to Mr. Piot to respond to the comments and suggestions.

Mr. Piot (*spoke in French*): I thank all the delegations for their support of our joint activities and in particular for their commitment to this question.

I remember the first debates on HIV/AIDS in the Security Council. Everyone who was there at the time will remember that the atmosphere was not as positive and supportive as it is today. At that time there also were very few results to report.

Together we have clearly made significant progress in implementing Security Council resolution 1308 (2000), but much remains to be done. As emphasized by several Council members, there are now more peacekeeping operations at the regional level. There, we do not yet have good coordination and implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention measures, but we have begun cooperation with a number of regional peacekeeping operations and I believe we can apply the same methods and principles that have been proven in the fight against this epidemic. We now are in the process of policy discussions in order for such operations to become a reality.

A number of representatives rightly raised the problem of evaluating the scope of the problem. As to the possible contribution of peacekeeping operations to the spread of HIV among populations in conflict areas, I do not think there is any very direct evidence of that yet. But this is going to be one of the central themes we will be working on in future. As Mr. Guéhenno already emphasized, we will step up our efforts to evaluate the impact of our programmes and to determine the scope of the problem. For example, we included evaluation of the programmes' impact on troops as part of the follow-up indicators to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, which emerged from the General Assembly's special session on that topic. Another point that was underscored is the need for more thorough analysis and better documentation on the relationship between AIDS, security and stability. We are trying to lay the groundwork for that and I think in 2004 we will be able to provide Council members with more evidence-based reports.

In regard to a permanent position within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on AIDS matters, I think it is absolutely essential. AIDS is not going to disappear in the next few years. As AIDS in peacekeeping has now become a central issue in our work, I think we have to give priority to finding the means to deal with it. I do not foresee any problems there.

In conclusion, there are still many challenges ahead. Preventing HIV/AIDS among peacekeeping troops can best be achieved by first intensifying prevention programmes among young people and then by having good linkage between national programmes and special armed forces programmes, a point that has been made by virtually everybody here. But, as the Council President says, we have to run faster than the epidemic.

I thank you all very much and we will provide a detailed joint report next year.

The President: I thank Mr. Piot for the clarification he has provided. As there are no further speakers inscribed on my list, the Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to inform Council members that a document summarizing the key points of the debate will be compiled and made public.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4860

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 November 2003

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4860th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 18 November 2003, at 11 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4860th meeting, held in private on 18 November 2003, the Security Council considered the item entitled 'The situation in Guinea-Bissau'.

"In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the President, with the consent of the Council, extended an invitation under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Henrique Perreira Rosa.

"The President extended invitations under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), His Excellency Mr. Gert Rosenthal; the representative of the current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), His Excellency Mr. Nana Effah-Apenteng; the representative of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, His Excellency Mr. Henrique Valle; the Chairman of the Ad hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of ECOSOC, His Excellency Mr. Dumisani Kumalo; and the Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), Mr. David Stephen.

"The Secretary-General, the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, members of the Security Council, the President of ECOSOC, the representative of the current Chairman of ECOWAS, the representative of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Chairman of the Ad hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of ECOSOC and the Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOGBIS had a constructive exchange of views."

03-61856 (E) 181103

United Nations S/PV.4861

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4861st meeting

Wednesday, 19 November 2003, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Donoso
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mrs. D'Achon
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Siddiqui
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Spain	Mr. Fernández Trigo
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-62100 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kieran Prendergast, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

I now give him the floor.

Mr. Prendergast: When I last briefed the Council on the Middle East, I described a bleak situation in which peace efforts were stalled on every front, tensions were rising in the region and the parties seemed to lurch from crisis to crisis. On behalf of the Secretary-General, I called on the Israelis and Palestinians to return to the negotiating table and recommit to the road-map process, and I urged the international community to reassert its role.

Sadly, very little of the sort has occurred since the last briefing. It is true that it has been a month of relative quiet. But that quiet has been met not with positive steps, but with inaction. Everyone has waited for others to act. The Government of Israel has waited for the Palestinian Authority to form an empowered Government and for terrorism to end. The Palestinian Authority has waited for Israel to halt military operations and take steps to ease the closures that have so deeply damaged Palestinian life, for the international community to lead the parties toward peace, and for its own political wrangling to end. And we, the international community, have waited for the parties to make progress on their own, despite the accumulation over the years of compelling evidence that they are incapable of making peace without international intervention.

Particularly now, when there is a new Palestinian Prime Minister, we cannot afford just to keep waiting. Progress towards Middle East peace cannot just be contingent on the actions expected of others. Even if the Israelis and Palestinians are not engaged face to face across the negotiating table, there is much they can do, and should do, to meet their road-map obligations. Those obligations, based on the core principle of parallelism, cannot just be bargaining chips dependent on actions by the other side.

The Palestinian Authority — whoever has control over security services — must confront and rein in militant groups that carry out terrorist attacks on Israelis. Performance, not lines of authority, should be the basis on which the Palestinian Authority is judged. The reform process is crucial, both to addressing pressing security needs and to promoting a democratic and prosperous future Palestinian State.

Israel, whose Prime Minister recently declared his readiness for his Government to carry out its road-map obligations, can and should take immediate steps to build confidence and prevent further backward progress. Such steps might include easing closures, removing settlement outposts, freezing settlement activity and halting construction of the separation barrier. Bolder steps — such as evacuating settlements in the Gaza Strip — might be necessary, if there is to be a renewal of hope and confidence and if the process is to be put back on track. Israel, like the Palestinian Authority, should be judged on its performance.

The international community must be actively engaged in assisting the parties to fulfil their road-map obligations, through the Quartet and through our own obligation to monitor and report. We, too, will be judged on the effectiveness of our efforts.

We hear talk here and there of a possible meeting between the two Prime Ministers and of another ceasefire. These tender shoots need nourishing. The peace process cannot be allowed to remain stalled. In such a dangerous environment, continued inertia could be deadly. While the past month has been relatively quiet, the dangers set out in my last briefing to the Council remain. Nothing has been done to mitigate the underlying instability.

The threat of terrorism still hangs over the head of each Israeli. As we have repeatedly stated, the Palestinian Authority — despite its obligations under the road map and under international humanitarian law — has done little to address that core issue.

For their part, Palestinians continue to suffer from closures and from Israeli military operations that kill and injure civilians. In addition, settlement activity, the construction of the separation barrier and the destruction and appropriation of Palestinian property continue to cut deep into the landscape of the West Bank, creating unwelcome facts on the ground. Israel, despite its obligations under the road map and international law, has done little to remedy the situation.

In the region, violations of the Blue Line by both sides continue, adding to an already tense situation. It remains essential to address seriously the regional track of the peace process.

Since my previous briefing to the Security Council, 44 people have lost their lives to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — five Israelis and 39 Palestinians. This raises the death toll since September 2000 to 2,947 Palestinians and 862 Israelis.

After the carnage of the past few months, one might conclude that the absence of large-scale successful terrorist attacks by one side and extrajudicial killings by the other during the current reporting period is an improvement. However, the deaths of more than one Palestinian each day since the previous briefing, including five children aged 16 or under, and the killing of five Israeli soldiers, highlight the need for increased seriousness of purpose on the part of the parties and the international community towards achieving peace.

Last week, the Palestinian Legislative Council confirmed the appointment of Ahmed Qurei — Abu Ala — as Palestinian Prime Minister. We welcome Mr. Qurei's appointment and expect him to take immediate steps to establish law and order, control violence and start operations to confront those who engage in terror. Such steps would begin to address Israel's security concerns and build the confidence necessary to develop a partnership for peace. The United Nations will do all it can to assist Mr. Qurei and his Government to implement the road map and pursue the path to peace.

As we have stated in each of the monthly briefings to the Security Council, the humanitarian situation, largely caused by Israeli security measures in the occupied Palestinian territory, continues to worsen. Movement restrictions on Palestinians continue to hamper everyday life and strangle the Palestinian economy. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as of 1 November there were 757 barriers of various types blocking roads in the West Bank, affecting the movement of 2.3 million people. In the Gaza Strip, movement on the north-south roads and around Gaza City has also been severely limited owing to the continued presence of barriers. The number of Palestinians with permits to leave Gaza and enter Israel remains minimal.

As we have described in previous briefings to the Security Council, the Israeli policy of restrictions on movement affects the ability of donors to carry out their work, as well as the ability of Palestinians to move freely through the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The donor Task Force on Project Implementation has prepared a paper that sets out the situation and concludes that measures taken by the Government of Israel on security grounds have greatly increased the difficulty and cost of providing social, economic and humanitarian support to the Palestinian civilian population. The operational environment has now deteriorated to a degree that many donors consider both unmanageable and unacceptable. Such measures compromise our work and have dramatically negative and indiscriminate effects on the living conditions of the civilian population.

The Government of Israel has given multiple assurances from the highest levels that donor activity and humanitarian aid will be fully facilitated. However, those assurances contrast starkly with the facts on the ground. As we have repeatedly stated, the international community lacks an empowered interlocutor on the Israeli side with whom donor representatives can discuss policy issues and solutions. In the absence of significant improvement of the conditions under which the international community operates, many donors are now reviewing the basis on which their operations in the West Bank and Gaza can continue.

We call upon the Government of Israel to take immediate and practical steps to live up to its assurances that it will do all it can to facilitate humanitarian and emergency aid efforts. We recognize

Israel's right and duty to defend its people from terrorism, but that should not be at the expense of the Palestinian people as a whole.

The humanitarian crisis among Palestinians is exacerbated by the funding shortfall of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which is the pre-eminent agency for support to Palestinian refugees. The high natural growth rate of the registered refugee population, combined with the overall economic deterioration, means that the reduction in donor support to the Agency is potentially disastrous. Some 60 per cent of Palestinian refugees are living below the poverty line and dependent on UNRWA for basic services. We urge donors to provide UNRWA with the level of funding necessary to effectively carry out its important work.

The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting of donors planned for November in Rome and described in the previous briefing to the Council has been postponed. That decision was made in part to allow more time for the new Palestinian Government to prepare for the meeting.

We have regularly reported on Israel's construction of the separation barrier in the West Bank and called for the Government of Israel to halt its construction. We have expressed grave concerns about its route, its likely humanitarian effects on Palestinians, its possible impact on the peace process and its implications for the future of the two-State solution. On 21 October, the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly adopted resolution A/ES-10/13, calling on both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map and demanding that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the separation barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Assembly requested that the Secretary-General report periodically on compliance with the resolution, with the first report focusing on the separation barrier. Later this month, the Secretary-General will present his report to the General Assembly, drawn from United Nations sources, as well as from consultations with the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Nevertheless, planning and construction of the barrier on Palestinian land has continued unabated. Such unilateral acts by the Government of Israel are not only inconsistent with its obligations under the road map, but also in complete contravention of the spirit of that document. Continued construction of the barrier, on another people's land, raises the level of suffering, diminishes trust and makes the realization of the vision of two States — a viable, sovereign and independent Palestinian State alongside the State of Israel — much more difficult.

I regret to inform the Council that the situation along the Blue Line has continued to remain tense. The current reporting period has been marked by events that raise serious concerns. Each side has continued to violate the Blue Line, and we have again called on all parties to refrain from such violations.

On 27 October, Hizbullah fired rockets and mortars at Israeli military positions in the Shaba'a Farms area. The Israeli Defence Forces responded with mortar rounds, artillery and aerial bombs. Minor injuries to a civilian on the Lebanese side were reported. There were no reports of any injuries on the Israeli side. At that time, Mr. Roed-Larsen, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority, publicly reiterated our call on the Government of Lebanon to exert control over the use of force from its territory and urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint.

Israeli air violations of the Blue Line have continued. On 22 October, Israeli jets crossed the Blue Line into Lebanese airspace on nine separate occasions. Shortly after the first of those violations, there was anti-aircraft fire from the Lebanese side of the Blue Line. Further Israeli overflights took place daily from 2 to 6 Nov[illegible], eliciting further anti-aircraft fire on one occasion. Continued and intrusive Israeli overflights over the past few days have not contributed to the defusion of tension.

On 5 November, the Israel Defence Forces informed the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) that they had identified on the Blue Line, in the vicinity of the village of Ghajar, a number of booby-trapped explosive devices that allegedly had been placed there by armed elements from the Lebanese side. Shortly thereafter, the IDF began to destroy those devices.

I do not think I need remind the Council of the current bleak situation in the region or of the further dangers that escalation along the Blue Line could bring.

Nevertheless, I wish to emphasize to all parties the importance of exercising restraint and of refraining from further violations that might lead to destructive consequences.

The period of inertia, excuses and conditionality in Middle East peacemaking must end. Efforts for peace cannot be held hostage to actions by extremists. Instead, we must take advantage of the current opportunity to make progress. There is now a Palestinian Government. The Israeli Government has reiterated its commitment to the road map. Track two initiatives — namely, the Geneva Accord and the Ayalon-Nusseibeh statement of principles — underline the existence of a glaring vacuum in peacemaking. As such, they are very welcome. They have caught the imagination of both peoples — Israeli and Palestinian. They have revealed a strong underlying desire for a peaceful settlement. They have revived the hope of each side that in the other there is a partner for peace.

It is neither worthwhile nor constructive to spend time on analyzing who has what authority in the Palestinian Government or on speculating as to the seriousness of the Israeli Government's commitment to the process. Let us rather take this opportunity to judge the parties by their actions. Those actions and the readiness of the international community to play its part will speak louder than any words. We must fervently hope that future generations will judge that our actions prepared the way for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, so long-awaited and longed-for, so long delayed.

The President: I thank Mr. Prendergast for his comprehensive briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussions on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4862

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4862nd meeting

Wednesday, 19 November 2003, 12.20 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

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03-62146 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Israel, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mekel (Israel) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 19 November 2003 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2003/1102, and which reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held today, Wednesday, 19 November 2003, regarding the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I should like to inform Council members that Bulgaria, China, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Spain and the United Kingdom have also joined as sponsors to the draft resolution contained in document S/2003/1100.

Accordingly, members of the Council have before them document S/2003/1100, submitted by Bulgaria, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I welcome the presence of the distinguished Secretary-General at this meeting today.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1515 (2003).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4863

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4863rd meeting

Wednesday, 19 November 2003, 12.25 p.m.

New York

President	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mrs. D'Achon
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Nekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Letter dated 23 October 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2003/1027)

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03-62152 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Letter dated 23 October 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2003/1027)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Atoki Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to the letter dated 23 October 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2003/1027), which contains the text of the final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council takes note of the final report (S/2003/1027) of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the Panel), which concludes its work, and emphasizes the connection, in the context of the continuing conflict, between the illegal exploitation of natural resources and trafficking in raw materials and arms and the strategies of the belligerents, which the Panel has highlighted.

"Condemns the continuing illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in the eastern part of the country, recalls that it has always categorically condemned these activities, which are one of the main elements perpetuating the conflict, and reaffirms the importance of stopping them by exerting, if need be, the necessary pressure on the armed groups, traffickers and all other actors involved.

"Urges all States concerned, especially those in the region, to take the appropriate steps to end these illegal activities, by proceeding with their own investigations, on the basis, in particular, of information and documentation accumulated by the Panel during its work and forwarded to Governments, including through judicial means where possible, and, if necessary, to report to the Council.

"Reaffirms its determination to closely monitor compliance with the arms embargo imposed in resolution 1493 (2003) of 28 July 2003 and expresses its intention to address the problem posed by the illicit flow of weapons into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including by considering the possible establishment of a monitoring mechanism.

"Emphasizes that the prompt re-establishment, by the Government of National Unity and Transition, of State authority throughout the territory, and the establishment of competent administrations to protect and control exploitation activities will constitute decisive elements for ending the plundering of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"Encourages the Government of National Unity and Transition to implement the resolutions adopted in Sun City in April 2002 within the framework of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

"Encourages States, trade-sector organizations and specialized bodies to monitor the trade in raw materials from the region in order to put an end to the plundering of natural resources in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly within the framework of the Kimberley process,

"Encourages States, the international financial community and the international organizations concerned to provide the aid needed to the Government of National Unity and Transition and to cooperate closely with it in order to support the establishment of national institutions capable of ensuring that the natural resources are exploited transparently to effectively benefit the Congolese people,

"Expresses the wish that convening at an appropriate time an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region of Africa will encourage the promotion of regional cooperation to the benefit of all States concerned,

"Expresses its intention to continue following closely this situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2003/21.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4864

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4864th meeting

Wednesday, 19 November 2003, 3.30 p.m.

New York

President	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Banoum
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Cheng Jingye
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce De Jeannet
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations

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03-62214 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The importance of mine action for peacekeeping operations

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the harmful and widespread impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance on civilian populations, especially children, and on humanitarian workers and United Nations staff, and, in this regard, stresses the vital importance of eliminating the threat of landmines.

"The Security Council recognizes the long-term consequences of landmines and unexploded ordnance for durable peace, security and development.

"The Security Council welcomes the effective coordination of mine action activities within the United Nations system and the important mandate of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in particular the role of UNMAS in ensuring the coordination of mine action throughout the United Nations system and the provision of support to multidimensional peace operations, as well as the role of the United Nations Development Programme in addressing the problem from a development perspective and providing technical, management and resource mobilization assistance to Governments of mine-affected States, and the role of the United Nations Children's Fund as the lead agency for mine-risk education. The Council also recognizes the significant contribution to mine action made by States, international and regional organizations and local and international non-governmental organizations.

"The Security Council urges all Member States to respect relevant international law that addresses landmines and unexploded ordnance, and the rights of persons affected by them, stressing the importance of international technical assistance in helping mine-affected States to harmonize their domestic laws with international obligations.

"The Security Council urges all parties to armed conflicts to abide by their mine related commitments, to cooperate to the fullest extent possible with mine-risk education and mine-clearing activities, and to ensure that abandoned stockpiles are adequately guarded or destroyed.

"The Security Council encourages Governments whose countries are affected by the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance to include a mine-action impact assessment in all development planning and to incorporate a strategic plan for mine action in national development plans and poverty-reduction strategies.

"The Security Council recognizes that mine action can play an important role in peace-building and confidence-building in post-conflict situations and encourages mine-affected States to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations, relevant non-governmental organizations and civil society, where appropriate.

"The Security Council calls upon the Secretary-General to provide information on the scope and humanitarian impact of the mine and unexploded ordnance problem in all relevant country-specific reports to the Security Council, and expresses its readiness to consider mine action concerns in all of its country-specific deliberations, as appropriate.

"The Security Council notes the importance of ensuring that the provision of technical advice and support for mine action is reflected in the mandates and personnel planning for peacekeeping operations and expresses its intention to address mine action concerns in the mandates and personnel planning for peacekeeping operations whenever appropriate.

"The Security Council recognizes the contribution that peacekeeping personnel can make in the areas of mine-risk education and demining and calls upon troop-contributing

countries, where appropriate, to train selected personnel to demine in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards.

"The Security Council recognizes the important role mine action can play in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) efforts by employing former soldiers in mine action programmes and encourages the Secretary-General to consider including mine action in DDR initiatives and to reflect such proposals in his reports to the Security Council, as appropriate.

"The Security Council urges Member States, as appropriate, to provide adequate and sustained financial assistance to support mine action, to alleviate the suffering of populations affected by mines and unexploded ordnance, and, whenever possible, to increase their support through further contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, and calls particular attention to the need to address the socio-economic, physical and psychosocial reintegration of landmine survivors, the need to facilitate the orderly return of refugees and internally displaced persons affected by mines and unexploded ordnance, the need to restore land to productive use, and the need to prioritize mine action efforts to enable the risk-free movement of people and goods.

"The Security Council considers that a comprehensive and coordinated approach by Member States, the United Nations and regional and local organizations is required to address the threat and the impact of mines and unexploded ordnance.

"To this end, the Council supports the general review made by the General Assembly on this matter since 1993 and invites the Secretary-General to address this subject, as needed, in his reports on the general activities of peacekeeping operations."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2003/22.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.